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Plato and Dōgen on Literature and Enlightenment

CAROL S. GOULD

To compare Dôgen and Plato might seem quixotic, given the vast conceptual and cultural gulf between them. Plato, a fourth century B.C.E. Athenian, has come to exemplify rationalist Western philosophy, whereas Dôgen, a thirteenth century Japanese Buddhist monk, is a key figure in the development of Japanese (Sôtô Zen) Buddhism. Moreover, Plato, a well-known target of Derrida, is an opponent of postmodernism, which he confronts in thinkers such as Protagoras. Thus, Plato accepts the principle of identity as axiomatic and, as an epistemological rationalist, he affirms an isomorphism between human thought and reality. In contrast, Dôgen foreshadows post-modernism by denying the correspondence between language and the world and while also rejecting the logical principle of identity. Dôgen, in a sense, deconstructs the Platonic self and a Platonically meaningful language.[2] Both, within their philosophical worlds, are iconoclasts.

This article shows that despite their different philosophical commitments, Plato and Dôgen are strangely alike. First of all, both are virtuoso litterateurs, known for innovative advances in their respective genres of expression. Each appreciates poetic expression aesthetically and sees it as vital for the path towards enlightenment. At the same time, both deny the value of literature and have predominantly non-literary aims. Paradoxically, each cautions us that literature is dangerous.

The similarities of Plato and Dôgen go beyond their apparent ambivalence about literature. In particular, they reflect on the same foundational philosophical questions, in some cases, resolving them similarly. They disagree, however, about the nature of enlightenment and how to achieve it. For Dôgen, enlightenment requires meditation and attentive sensitivity to the details of daily life, whereas for Plato, enlightenment requires intellectual dialogue, contemplation of abstract concepts, and ignoring quotidian tasks and details. Both thinkers begin from the same point, namely, skepticism about the phenomenal world and the precision of natural language. Where do they veer off in such radically different directions? My focus here is on their views of language and its role in finding enlightenment. By exploring their common terrain, we shall see where they part ways and how each expresses his ideals. Given their shared fascination for poetic language, it is crucial to look first at their identities as authors.

Plato and Dôgen as Writers

Plato's *oeuvre* spans fifty years of creative activity, which many scholars divide in terms of early, middle, and late periods. The early works center on the character of Socrates and, arguably, reveal a philosophical alliance with the historical Socrates. The middle works express the views generally associated with Platonism – the theory of Ideal Forms, confidence in philosophical enlightenment, and a focus on the inseparability of philosophical life and method. The late works express Plato's critique of his Platonism while anticipating Aristotle's philosophy. In representative dialogues of each period – assuming one accepts this taxonomy – one finds abundant use of irony on the part of both Plato as author and Socrates as character. In all of his works, Plato displays a dazzling virtuosity with language, evincing an appreciation for structural clarity and semantic richness.

Much of his work is experimental, as for example, his understated modes of characterization, his layering of narrative voices, and his allusions to earlier and contemporaneous Greek authors. Occasionally, he exhibits a sense of comedy as well as tragedy. In fact, at the end of the night depicted in the *Symposium*, the character of Socrates defends the maverick view that the good tragic playwright must also be able to write comedy, and the good comic playwright must also be able to write tragedy. Plato's *oeuvre* suggests that Plato holds himself to this ideal.

One of the most puzzling aspects of Plato's work arises from its poetic brilliance. Plato argues throughout his creative life that poetry is evil or, at best, a type of sophistry. Aesthetically *good* poetry is especially bad, for it fractures the psyches of the audience members by fostering in them emotionality, aestheticism, and, most dangerously, false beliefs. Plato sees poetry as falsehood, illusion, barely the palest reflection of reality.

Interestingly, however, Plato's dialogues were seminal for the development of philosophical writing in Greek antiquity. Drama, being a form of popular culture, was then a powerful form of political rhetoric. Plato may have been experimenting with the use of drama as philosophical rhetoric, as well as an artistic means of defending his views of metaphysics, logic, epistemology, politics and ethics. The dramatic form allows him to probe modes of reasoning and to show, not simply to describe, the process of acquiring philosophical understanding or, failing that, falling into an abyss of ignorance. Aristotle's extant philosophical writings, while not dialogues, reflect Plato's dialogical practice and dialectical commitments. Plato's influence pervades the Western literary traditions from Aristotle through St. Augustine to the Renaissance and romanticism to the present.

Dôgen's works extend from approximately 1231 to 1253. Many scholars classify his works as falling into early and late periods, which they describe variously in terms of extreme or cataclysmic shifts. Recently, however, Steven Heine has argued cogently – and, apparently leaving no stone unturned – that this taxonomy is flawed.[3] Dôgen, as Heine argues, has a multifaceted *oeuvre*, which reflects a multiplicity of viewpoints,

purposes, and literary projects. Heine proposes that, for the sake of understanding Dôgen's thought and writings, it should instead be analyzed in terms of early, middle, and late periods, of around ten years each. The transitions one detects are correlated with events that made different demands on Dôgen as an author, teacher, administrator, and human being. For example, in Dôgen's late period, he produced the *Chiji shingi*, which indicates, Professor Heine explains, "his [Dôgen's] plans for integrating the lay community into the structures of monastic life."[4] Therefore, while some view this work as uninspired, Heine is suggesting that we examine the purpose for which it was written, which is to emphasize to the monks the importance of donors and the best way to interact with them. With this in mind, the *Chiji shingi* becomes a remarkable administrative guide or set of memos.

Dôgen's influence on Japanese letters is as seminal as Plato's is on Western philosophical writing. First of all, Dôgen boldly incorporated the Japanese vernacular (*kana*) into Buddhist writings where one would have expected to see *kanbun*.[5] Moreover, as Heine puts it, Dôgen "was the first disseminator of kôans in the history of Japanese Zen."[6] In disseminating, however, he was not uncritical. Like Plato, Dôgen has a subversive streak so that he unceasingly challenges accepted views and interpretations of his predecessors.[7] His output includes poetry (both *waka* and *kanshi*), meditation manuals, sermons, collections of kôans, and commentaries on kôans. Heine emphasizes that Dôgen, in each of his creative periods, experiments with literary forms and language, and that many of his works show meticulous care is taken in writing and revising.[8]

Dôgen's writings obviously reveal a resourceful, creative mind, ever alert to new demands made on his discourse by the flux of his life. Despite new purposes and circumstances surrounding his work, his output is consistently literary. As Heine remarks about Dôgen's late period:

It is also important to understand the complexity of the late period in that Dôgen never abandoned his interest in poetic creativity and lyricism, as is reflected in a profuse use of [among other things] the symbolism of plum blossom imagery in various kinds of prose and poetic writings.[9]

Despite Dôgen's care with language, his evident aesthetic sensitivity, and his commitment to poetry, he disparages poetry. As Heine discusses elsewhere,[10] Dôgen describes poetry as "worthless," a waste of precious time, which will impede our progress towards enlightenment. Dôgen thus presents us with a paradox about poetry much like Plato's.

Both writers, however, use paradox in their work, and it is the confrontation with paradox that both poets find necessary for enlightenment. So, one must use poetry in order to abandon it. For both, then, the poet's aesthetic ability is key to engaging the audience members and then to persuading them to reject the aesthetic in order to gain enlightenment. For Plato and Dôgen alike, the poet can guide the audience away from the aesthetic by using paradox.

Poetic Language

Dôgen and Plato both express nihilism about natural language in the literary form (as well as content) they develop. Each shows that enlightenment or philosophical understanding begins in confusion, a confusion which involves knowing that one is confused. Their discourses are designed to bring the reader, student, or dramatized interlocutor to that state of feeling lost. As if to bring the reader to a new level of bewilderment, both use their chosen poetic forms to condemn all poetic expression, occasionally using metaphors of toxicity to describe its effects.

Plato's use of the dialogue form, which he did not invent but certainly brought to a new level of sophistication, reflects his view of perceptual knowledge and the misleading nature of language. Socrates, the usual protagonist, exploits a stunning array of rhetorical tricks, irony, and logical fallacies to reduce his interlocutors' claims to contradiction. The character of Socrates (as opposed to the historical Socrates) embodies one of Plato's chief objections to poetic narratives, namely that they exploit the power of language in order to seduce, betray, and deceive. In Plato's *Symposium*, the character of Alcibiades, describes Socrates as "outrageous as a satyr…more amazing than Marsyas, who bewitched with his flute… [except that Socrates] can do the same thing…with mere words." Alcibiades goes on to confess, "Whenever I hear him, my heart throbs and I weep, more than if I were in a religious frenzy" (215e).[11] In the *Laches*, Nicias, a great general, describes Socrates as "entangling" his interlocutors and hanging them out to dry (188a). Socrates' stinging technique becomes somewhat less combative and polemical as Plato's views evolve, but Plato never really abandons it, except perhaps very late in his creative life.

In the *Theaetetus*, he distinguishes between a debate or virtuosic display and a conversation or serious joint pursuit of knowledge (167e-168c). The former exploits the ambiguity in natural language, while the latter involves an effort to uncover the philosophical language that mirrors reality. Plato views poetry as a type of rhetoric, referring often to the battle between philosophy and rhetoric, or between philosophy and poetry. This battle between poetry and philosophy is one battle in the war between the (anti-) metaphysics of particulars and one of universals, or between nominalism and realism. The dialogues present both literary and logical arguments against the fundamental reality of perceptual particulars.

Turning to Dôgen, he did not invent the kôan, but brought it from China in order to adapt it to Japanese Zen Buddhism.[12] Dôgen comments on and refines the kôan, which is an apparently illogical but tautly constructed form of discourse. He offers novel interpretations of traditional Chinese kôans, bringing to mind the Platonic Socrates' deft, irreverent interpretations of traditional philosophical arguments and literary passages. The kôans deal with simple, concrete cases, and lead one to a point of utter confusion, which is not resolved explicitly in the discourse.

Plato rhetorically leads us beyond the words and texts to increasingly abstract levels of understanding until we reach the limits of language, and, all being well, have

a rationally intuitive grasp of the Forms. Plato takes it as axiomatic that the knowing self is distinct from what is known. Numerical plurality is therefore real for Plato. Dôgen rhetorically makes us look closely at the world of particularity so as to intuit the oneness and fluidity of reality and the illusion of the separateness of our egos. He therefore denies the duality between consciousness and the object.

The Phenomenal World

Dôgen and Plato both caution that we are easily seduced by appearances, of which natural language is a part. They offer similar arguments for their mistrust of the senses. In *Genjôkôan*, Dôgen refers to the perspectival basis of perceptual unreliability, such that a shift in perspective changes the content of appearances:

When you ride in a boat and watch the shore, you might assume that the shore is moving. But when you keep your eyes closely on the boat, you can see that the boat moves.[13]

And, Dôgen states again :

When you sail out in a boat to the middle of an ocean where no land is in sight, and view the four directions, the ocean looks circular, and does not look any other way. But the ocean is neither round nor square; its features are infinite in variety.[14]

In many of his dialogues, Plato articulates similar concerns about the perspectival nature of sense data. In Plato's attack on poetry in Book Ten of his *Republic*, he refers to the well-worn example of the straight stick, which appears bent when immersed in water. It is only by measurement that we can judge whether the stick is bent. Therefore, because we have no *perceptual* criterion for privileging one perspective over another and sense perception tethers us to *some* perspective, perception cannot be a reliable source of knowledge.

Plato argues expansively against the thesis that perception is knowledge in his *Theaetetus* (153a-164b), offering among other objections, versions of the dream and madman arguments that we find in Descartes. Plato points out that we often experience perceptual error, as for instance, when we perceive a person in a dream, only to awaken and realize that the person does not exist.

Plato reasons that objects of knowledge must be permanent, for knowledge itself is certain and non-changing. But, he argues, objects perceived by the senses are constantly changing. Therefore, if we assume that perception is knowledge, the things we perceive as real are constantly becoming something else. Thus, the endurance of perceptible things is an illusion. Permanence exists only in the transcendent realm of the Platonic Forms, which we grasp through rational apprehension. Plato concludes that enlightenment requires one to transcend the realm of sense perception and to rely on reason, eventually to grasp Being by means of rational intuition.

After expressing their shared distrust in sense perception, Plato and Dôgen part ways. Plato argues that rational apprehension is non-perspectival, whereas Dôgen rejects that. As we shall see, Dôgen does not allow for this because he is less optimistic than

Plato that language has a logical foundation. Given his belief that rational insight is non-perspectival, Plato aspires to what Thomas Nagel calls a "view from nowhere," a god-like, purely rational standpoint, which constitutes enlightenment.

Dôgen accepts that nothing is permanent, except the principle that everything is in constant flux. All mental activity, for Dôgen, is perspectival. His refusal to go beyond the senses shows his kinship with the empirical and pragmatic traditions. Dôgen denies it is possible for anyone to have a "view from nowhere."[15]

Natural Language as Illusory

How does perceptual illusion undermine natural language, which both philosophers believe misleads the un-evolved or "un-awakened" to take words at their face value? On first consideration, words refer to things in the world. Moreover, in order for us to use language to communicate, the meanings of terms must be relatively stable (allowing that meaning transforms non-arbitrarily as social linguistic conventions change). Because things in the phenomenal world do not remain the same over time, the referents of words cannot be stable.

That is, both Plato and Dôgen deny that the principle of identity holds for the perceptual world. Both see perceptual things as, by nature, in constant flux and having no fixed properties at any one time. A thing's phenomenal properties are dependent on the mind perceiving them. In the *Genjokôan*, Dôgen expresses this:

When you sail out in a boat to the middle of an ocean where no land is in sight, and view the four directions, the ocean looks circular, and does not look any other way. But the ocean is neither round nor square; its features are infinite in variety. It is like a palace. It is like a jewel. It only looks circular as far as you can see at that time. All things are like this.[16]

Plato articulates the same point in his *Symposium*, among other places:

Although…we assume a man is the same person in his dotage as in his infancy, and we call him the same, every bit of him is different, and he is constantly becoming a new man, while the former man is ceasing to exist, as you can see from his hair, his flesh, his bones, his blood, and all the rest of his body (207d).

Dôgen and Plato, then, agree that the principle of identity does not describe the phenomenal world.

They part ways, however, as to whether we should reject this principle *tout court* and adopt instead a principle of universal flux. For Dôgen, one is enlightened when one realizes that flux is the only permanent, universal principle, whereas for Plato, one is enlightened when one sees that this principle does not apply to the truly real. That is, for Plato, the enlightened one, or philosopher, grasps the permanent, transcendent Forms. Because, Plato contends, a person can awaken to the Forms, the human soul must be as real and enduring as the Forms themselves.[17] Plato thus maintains that both the human self and the world of the Forms conform to the law of identity – that is, Forms and souls remain the same over time.

Regarding the question of personal identity over time, Dôgen disagrees with Plato. What the enlightened grasp, for Dôgen, is that the self is in flux, just as Plato maintains that the human body is. In *Genjôkôan*, Dôgen says:

Just as firewood does not become firewood again after it is ash, you do not return to birth after death. This being so, it is an established way in Buddha-dharma to deny that birth turns into death. Accordingly, birth is understood as no-birth. It is an unshakable teaching in Buddha's discourse that death does not turn into birth. Accordingly, death is understood as no-death. Birth is an expression complete this moment. Death is an expression complete this moment. They are like winter and spring. You do not call winter the beginning of spring, nor summer the end of spring.[18]

David Loy has interpreted this passage as shedding light on Dôgen's view of the self:

Because life and death, like spring and summer, are not *in* time, they are timeless. And if there is no one non-temporal who is born and dies, then there are only the events of birth and death....then there is no real birth and death. Such is the consequence of the nonduality between me and that most uncomfortable attribute of all, "my" birth/death.[19]

Dan Lusthaus, addressing this same image, remarks:

No thing (i.e., permanent essence/self) passes from tree to firewood to ash. Each moment is a unique, impermanent configuration….No self "transforms" from one thing to another, no permanent substratum violates impermanence. Each thing sheds its "self" each moment, its "self" being its momentary configuration as what it is and its relation with everything else. substratum violates impermanence.[20]

For Dôgen, if the permanent self is an illusion, then indexical terms like "I" or "you" become illusory, for they suggest that when we use them, they refer to specific enduring individuals with attributes. There is neither a referent that persists through time, nor a subject with real, distinguishable properties.

Dôgen detects another problem in natural language. He says in *Genjokôan*, "To carry yourself forward and experience myriad things is delusion."[21] This suggests that plurality or duality is illusory; and so reality is monistic. Therefore, linguistic terms, of which there are many, fail to refer to real things.

Plato himself faces a similar problem. He inherited a metaphysical monism from Parmenides, who argues that plurality is impossible because to say "x is not y" implies that x includes non-being (in its not being y). Plato tackles the argument and solves the problem differently: he offers a theory of reality consisting of unchanging, eternal elements of reality, each of which is self-sufficient. This is his well-known theory of Forms. For Plato, there is an ideal, conceptual language, with one – and only one – term for every Form. The natural language used in common parlance is messy, ambiguous, and misleading. Plato alludes to this philosophical language in his *Republic* and *Cratylus*. One of the philosopher's goals is to uncover this language through rigorous conceptual analysis.

Both Plato and Dôgen, then, disparage natural language because of its relation to the sensory world. The starting point for enlightenment, for both, is seeing how imprecise and deceptive ordinary language can be. Both believe further that the initial step requires a willingness to confront paradox, and this is found, as we see above, most clearly in their respective poetic forms.

The crucial difference is that Plato, starting from his rationalist foundation, infers that natural language must be concealing the elegant ideal language. Dôgen, on the other hand, sees natural language as a dynamic system with no reference to permanent meanings. More precisely, Dôgen sees language as a cultural artifact that gives shape to meaning through its usage. As Thomas Kasulis tells us:[22]

Zen suggests that meaning is a construction out of emptiness (*mu*). Yet…meaning is not an arbitrary construction. It arises out of the contextualizing of the rawly given….[it] takes form in the interplay between the possibilities within the experiencer and within the givenness.[23]

Dale Wright fleshes out this hermeneutical idea of language in Zen thought:

Language is far more than a tool for…expression and communication. The language that the Zen master "uses" to teach his students would also be what he is teaching. Learning "Zen" would depend upon learning Zen language and the appropriate distinctions built into it…Language is not a "veil" preventing vision; it is a "window" which opens vision.[24]

The ambiguity and indirection of poetic language make literature well suited for contemplative thought. Dôgen wants us to grasp the contradictions within the practice of natural language without trying to fit them into a logically consistent system.

Enlightenment and Desire

Not surprisingly**,** Plato and Dôgen disagree over the goal of knowledge, though interestingly, not its nature. Both believe the path to knowledge or enlightenment is an arduous process which requires transcending one's own limited perspective and desires. Plato describes this by means of a vertical metaphor of ascent, which Dôgen would reject. Both view enlightenment as an immediate, non-discursive grasping of the nature of things. It is something that one must be led to, for the real cannot be described in language. For Plato, apprehending a Form is an immediate, un-analyzable epistemic act, an experience of rational intuition. It cannot be expressed in language, but is achieved by the arduous discursive endeavor of dialectic (which Plato depicts variously at different stages in his development). To appeal to the metaphor of the veil, philosophical dialectic is a process of uncovering. In Socrates' speech in Plato's *Symposium*, he explains that when one has grasped the Forms (with the "faculty capable of seeing it"), one is in contact "with truth, not a reflection of truth." Plato classifies people in terms of how they direct erotic energy. In the *Republic*, he draws an invidious contrast between people who love wisdom with those who love the arts, sensuality, or victory. For Plato, enlightenment involves grasping axiomatic truths, whereas for Dôgen, all insight is on a par.

Dôgen also indicates that attaining enlightenment or Buddha nature is a complex enterprise. It involves seeing the insignificance of transitory things of the material world and the emptiness of objects of desire. In *Genjôkôan*, he contrasts the Buddha with a merely sentient being: "Those who have great realization of delusion are Buddhas; those who are greatly deluded about realization are sentient beings."[25] A Buddha is without self-consciousness; he transcends his illusory self so that, "when Buddhas are truly Buddhas they do not necessarily notice that they are Buddhas. However, they are actualized Buddhas, who go on actualizing Buddhas."[26]

A Buddha, realizing that all things are Buddha nature, annihilates the ego. But this is not an achievement that lasts, because there is no stable self. The idea of personal continuity is an illusion. Professor Lusthaus analyzes Dôgen's remark in *Genjôkôan* about "the logic of nothing at all has an unchanging self."

Realization is not something gained and clung to, but something perpetually relinquished,[27] [and] enlightenment itself is neither permanent nor final, nor full disclosure beyond its horizon. Insight and blindness inhabit the same gaze, though the truly blind can't see that.[28]

A Buddha, like Plato's Socrates, knows that he does not know and that he thus must continue his quest. However, *unlike* Plato's Socrates, the Buddha feels compassion for the majority who live with the illusion of understanding. Life for both involves the practice of their chosen methods. For Plato, it is in principle possible for intellectual – and only intellectual – desires to be truly satisfied (*Republic* 9).

Dôgen denies that any satisfaction endures through time, because the self (like everything else) is constantly renewed. The principle of identity, for Dôgen, is false. Thus, as Lusthaus emphasizes, the Buddhist monk must maintain constant vigilance so that at every moment brings a *renewed* awareness.

Surprisingly, the practical implications for daily life are quite similar for both Plato and Dôgen: both paths to enlightenment require a life of simplicity and minimal worldly pleasures. For neither one would this be onerous. In Dôgen's case, however, enlightenment includes experiencing beauty and importance in the simplest aspects of life. With regard to the beauty of the ordinary, Yuriko Saito observes:

[Dôgen] identifies Buddha nature with grasses, trees, bushes, mountains, rivers….By far the most vivid examples he cites…are a donkey's jaw, a horse's mouth…in short, those objects and phenomena, which are commonly shunned…for being… unpleasant. One of the bounds to be overcome in Zen enlightenment is our "natural" tendency to appreciate the perfect, the opulent, and the gorgeous, while being dissatisfied with the opposite qualities.[29]

For Plato, enlightenment excludes enjoying such experiences. In the *Republic*, for example, Plato speaks with contempt for the "lovers of sights and sounds." If one has cultivated intellectual desires, she will have neither the energy nor interest in the things that satisfy the others. In both cases, however, the enlightened one must re-enter the vortex of material and social affairs. Plato's philosopher must descend to

take part in the state, a small sacrifice for the privilege of contemplation. She is motivated to participate not by compassion, but by prudence "in order to avoid being governed by someone worse." Similarly, there are times when a Buddha must enter the fray out of compassion for sentient beings. Plato's ethic, however, is not one of compassion, but rather of self-interest.

Both are sensitive to the realities of embodied human existence. Dôgen's Buddha, however, delights in it by living fully in the moment. As he says, again in *Genjôkôan*, "When you see forms or hear sounds fully engaging body-and-mind, you grasp things directly."[30] Thomas Cleary, in commenting on *Genjôkôan*, remarks that zazen practice is crucial, precisely because of the inadequacy of intellectual knowledge. To attain enlightenment, one must be mindful in the practice of daily life – for instance, cooking, washing, and gardening.

For Plato, such practices are distractions that slow down our ascent. In the *Theaetetus*, Socrates speaks of the focus on daily life as enslavement. In his *Republic*, the members of the enlightened class have no need to deal with quotidian tasks, because the other citizens take care of all worldly concerns, whether they involve cooking, building, gardening or finances. While the philosophers, like the Zen master, must descend to the social realm in order to promote their enlightened self-interest, the philosopher ignores material existence to the extent that embodiment and social reality allows. Concrete reality, in all its fascinating particularity, holds no allure for Plato, who instead finds it a distraction that appeals to the unenlightened. The Platonic philosopher transcends society, even when she is in its midst. Dôgen sees it differently.

To see what underlies their differences, we must look to their notions of desire. For Dôgen, it is never fulfilled, because it is only momentarily satisfied, to arise again. Given the flux of existence, no desire can ever be gratified and put to rest. As Lusthaus emphasizes, for Dôgen, the self is constantly changing. Thus, the idea of fulfilling a desire becomes absurd.

For Plato, however, only *some* kinds of desires are incapable of being gratified. The psyche, Plato maintains, has three parts: appetite, emotion, and reason, with desire (*eros*) residing in all. The desires of appetite and emotion need constant replenishment, because the pleasure we have in satisfying one of these desires (for wine, for sex, for aesthetic pleasure, the company of a friend, etc.) is temporary. Gratifying these desires is like scratching an itch, which brings only momentary relief. The desires of intellect, in contrast, do not need replenishment. Once one reaches a new level of understanding, one remains there until propelled upward by continued desire for more knowledge. Once one reaches the supra-phenomenal realm, there are no perspectival limits. In Book Nine of his *Republic*, Plato argues variously (one might say this is the real subject of his *Republic*) that satisfying intellectual desires is exquisitely pleasurable, far more so than satisfying other desires. Thus, the desires of the intellect are beneficial in driving us to pursue knowledge. Plato does not see us slipping, like Sisyphus, back to where we started, as Dôgen does. In principle, it may be possible to reach an

enlightened state of non-desire, for Plato, but only when one has become disembodied. Then the entire realm of Forms becomes transparent.

Plato's theory of desire rests on his dualist metaphysical realism and correlative notion of the self. Ultimately, however, Plato grounds his theory of desire and enlightenment in his acceptance of the principle of identity, which is arguably the groundwork for his entire metaphysical theory. Plato accepts the principle of identity, because he can fathom neither contradiction nor, therefore, a reality that cannot be discovered through rigorous logical analysis. Dôgen's theory rests on what we might call his "anti-metaphysical phenomenalism" whereby everything, including the self, consists of shifting phenomena. His rejection of permanent identity makes it impossible to accept logical necessity. Our concepts thus become based on a pragmatic contingency.

Conclusion

In comparing Dôgen and Plato, we can see their respective commitments more distinctly. This raises new philosophical questions however. For Plato, one wants to know whether reason admits of rational validation, as implied by his commitment to the Principle of Identity. For Dôgen, one wants to know whether one can use rational methods to undermine a rational system. Or, as Thomas Kasulis poses it, "How does the quest for emptiness not degenerate into…nihilism?"[31] Interestingly, for all of their differences, the problems facing both philosopher-poets are problems of self-reference. One might fruitfully speculate that the differences between the two iconoclasts, Plato and Dôgen, reflect the differences in the underlying values of their respective cultures, which each strives to refashion. Their success at doing so has made them representatives of their traditions and evermore fascinating thinkers.[32]

Notes and References

1 Earlier versions of this article were presented at The Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association (December 2005), at the FAU Conference on Asian Philosophy and Ideas (March 2006), and at the Annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain Division of the American society for Aesthetics (July 2006). I thank the members of the audiences for their questions and comments.

2 For a study that implies a dissenting view, see Kiyotaka Kimura, "The Self in Medieval Japan: Focusing on Dôgen," *Philosophy East and West* 41/3 (1991): 327-340.

3 See Steven Heine, "The Dôgen Canon: Dôgen's Pre-*Shôbôgenzô* Writings and the Question of Change in His Later Works," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 24:1-2 (1997): 39-85; and his more recent *Did Dôgen Go to China? What He Wrote and When He Wrote It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

4 Steven Heine, *Did Dôgen Go to China?*, p. 193.

5 I am grateful to Professor Heine for discussing this point with me.

6 Steven Heine, "The Dôgen Canon," p. 55; see also Steven Heine, "Kôans in the Dôgen Tradition: How and Why Dôgen Does What He Does With Kôans," *Philosophy East and West* 54/1 (2004): 1-19.

7 Steven Heine, *Did Dôgen Go to China ?*, p. 195.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., p. 224.

10 Steven Heine, "The Zen Poetry of Dôgen," notes accompanying public lecture, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, April 2004.

11 Translation from Greek is mine.

12 Heinrich Dumoulin, James W. Heisig, and Paul F. Knitter, *Zen Buddhism: A History, Japan* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, 2005).

13 Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dôgen*, trans. Robert Aitken, etc. (New York: North Point Press, 1985), p. 70.

14 Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop*, p. 71.

15 For insight into how this bears on Dôgen's phenomenology of time, see Robert Wicks**,** "The Idealization of Contingency in Traditional Japanese Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 39/3 (2005): 90-92.

16 Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop*, p. 71.

17 For just how different this is from Plato, see Yuasa Yasuo, *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-body Theory*, ed. Thomas P. Kasulis; trans. Nagatomo Shigenori and Thomas P. Kasulis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 117.

18 Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop*, p. 70.

19 David Loy, "Language Against its own Mystifications: Deconstruction in Nâgârjuna and Dôgen," *Philosophy East and West* 49/3 (1999): 245-260.

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23 Ibid., p. 371.

24 Dale S. Wright, "Rethinking Transcendence: The Role of Language in Zen Experience" *Philosophy East and West* 42/1 (1992), p. 125.

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29 Yuriko Saito, "The Japanese Aesthetics of Imperfection and Insufficiency," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55/4 (1997), p. 381.

30 Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop*, p. 70.

31 Ibid., p. 369.

32 I am grateful to my research assistant Susan D'Aloia for her editorial assistance and to my colleague Henry Ruf for our discussions of Dôgen. Thanks also to Steven Heine for extensively discussing Dôgen with me.

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The Creole Quadrille in Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Ton beau capitaine* : A Postcolonial Perspective

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In *The Science of Logic*, Hegel presents his triad of the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The thesis is an element of life which is abstracted and made into an Absolute. The Absolute brings into being its Other, or opposite, and negates it, and then the Other in turn negates the Absolute. The conflict is resolved by mediation that results in a synthesis that transcends the negations and contradictions. Hegel writes that "the other of the other, the negative of the negative, is immediately the positive" (836). He explains further that all the oppositions that are assumed as fixed, as for example finite and infinite, individual and universal, are not in contradiction through, say, an external connection; on the contrary, as an examination of their nature has shown, they are in and for themselves a transition; the synthesis and the subject in which they appear is the product of their Notion's own reflection. (833)

Hegel says that "the first is essentially preserved and retained even in the other" and "the latter is the truth of the former" (834). He speaks of a circle that returns upon itself, "the end being wound back into the beginning . . . by the mediation" (842).

Hegel's dialectic can be useful in analyzing some colonial and postcolonial issues. The Absolute can be seen as the colonizer, and the Other, its opposite, can be represented by the colonized. A dichotomy and tension between the colonizer and the colonized, or the Absolute and the Other, permeate much of the literature on colonial and postcolonial theory and criticism. For example, Albert Memmi divides his book, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, into two main parts: "Portrait of the Colonizer" and "Portrait of the Colonized," and by so doing, sets up this opposition. Frantz Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks*, writes that "[t]he white man is sealed in his whiteness" and "[t]he black man in his blackness" (9).[1]

In his book he focuses on white against black, as he seeks to "ascertain the directions of this dual narcissism and the motivations that inspire it" (10). Furthermore, in his seminal text *Orientalism*, Edward W. Said asserts that the concept of "Orientalism" versus "Occidentalism" is constructed by Western intellectuals to perpetuate the hegemony of the West over the East, and in so doing is accused of perpetuating essentialism in his own critique.[2]

While it is common to find the thesis and antithesis of the colonizer and colonized, and of white versus colored, in colonial and postcolonial literature and discourse, it is not as easy to come across a resolution or synthesis. At the conclusion of *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Memmi writes: "I know very well that after this diagnosis the reader expects remedies" (145). He explains, however, "I did not conceive of this book as a work of protest or even as a search for solutions," and he does not suggest ways to resolve the problem. Fanon, at the end of his text, writes that as a "man of color" he wants "only this":

That the enslavement of man by man cease forever. This is, of one by another. That it be possible for me to discover and to love man, wherever he may be. The Negro is not. Any more than the white man. Both must turn their backs on the inhuman voices which were those of their respective ancestors in order that authentic communication be possible. (231)

Here there is a plea for synthesis and mutual cooperation. Furthermore, in an afterword written about fifteen years after *Orientalism* was first published, Said concludes by pointing out "that although the animosities and inequities still exist . . . , there is now at least a general acceptance that these represent not an eternal order but a historical experience whose end, or at least partial abatement, may be at hand" (352). Said acknowledges improvement and expresses hope for a more complete resolution in the future.

In her analysis of colonialism and postcolonialism, Ania Loomba writes of the "simple binary opposition" (105) that is often presented between the colonizer and colonized, and between races. She explains that "there are enormous cultural and racial differences within each of these categories as well as cross-overs between them."[3] I propose that through cross-over and interpolation a positive synthesis can be achieved in regard to the colonizer and colonized, or to the thesis and the antithesis. Through certain art forms such as dance, a meshing can occur that mediates and elevates the relationship of the colonizer and colonized. The art form, or dance, becomes an arbitrator that successfully brings together two or more cultures in an optimistic, mutually agreeable setting. In this essay, I will specifically address a European dance, the quadrille, in a particular colonized area, the Caribbean, and demonstrate through Simone Schwarz-Bart's play *Ton beau capitaine* how it facilitates a successful synthesis of cultures.

The quadrille is a formal ballroom dance for four couples that was popular in Europe in the 1800s. It originated in France and was introduced to social circles in London in 1815. According to Desmond F. Strobel, in the *International Encyclopedia of Dance*, the term "quadrille" may have come from the Italian word "squadra" which refers to a group of horsemen who are armed and situated in a square, ready to take part in "military defense and tournament games" (285). The quadrille evolved and

developed over time. In 1662 there was a festival masque called *Le Quadrille des Nations* at the Louvre, which included the duc de Guise and other ornately attired men who performed on horseback. In 1743, the quadrille was associated with a group of four to twevle uniformly-dressed dancers who performed "symmetrical dance patterns as a chorus." Later in 1765, French dancing master Claude-Marc Magny published instructions for six ballroom dances, in which couples would form a square and dance in various geometric patterns, and one was called *le quadrille.*

Eventually the quadrille became established as an elaborate square dance, and there were two ways to perform it in France in the eighteenth century. In the first, "two couples stood side by side in one line facing two other couples standing opposite them." In the second, "one couple stood at each side of the four-sided square; each man had his partner at his right." There would be a theme or figure which would alternate with a refrain or change. During the eighteenth century, a figure and ten changes were common; however, during the nineteenth century it became customary to incorporate only five figures. During this time the quadrille was very popular, spread into England, and became a favorite pastime. Directions for quadrille combinations were printed in a variety of sources. For example, a nineteenth-century manuscript, whose authorship is anonymous, was discovered by Jennifer Shennan, and is currently in the Turnbull Library of the National Library of New Zealand. This manuscript contains several quadrilles, including the "Bath Quadrilles," which are "typical examples of nineteenth century quadrilles" (Aldrich 26), and call for five figures. However, there are also instructions in the manuscript for a "Twelve Quadrille," which is more unusual because it contains twenty-six figures that are intended to be danced by six couples. Included in the manuscript are also graphs and drawings that illustrate some of the directions.

Some composers wrote music specifically for the quadrille, and music was also "adapted from popular operas, ballets, songs, and anthems . . . to fit the dance form precisely" (Strobel 286). A quadrille band usually consisted of a string quartet, harp, flute, cornet, and piano. The tempo of each figure was somewhat different, and there was a pause of about twenty seconds between figures which gave dancers an opportunity to engage in brief and "polite conversation" (287). As many new quadrilles came into being, it became necessary to engage dancing masters to call out commands. Eventually, enthusiasm for the quadrille plummeted when jazz became popular after World War I.

On the other hand, in the Caribbean, native peoples and slaves had their own music and dance. Some of the earliest known inhabitants, the Arawaks, played a variety of instruments such as flutes, drums, and other percussion instruments, which accompanied their songs and dances (Uri 22-26). Indians called Caribs performed sacred dances as well as dances of combat, and also used percussion instruments (26-28). Although the Arawaks and Caribs were eventually "exterminated by disease, warfare, and suicide" (Davis 791), some of the instruments they played, such as maracas (shakers) and the guiro (scraper), continue to be used in some Caribbean bands.

African slaves were imported in the early 1500s and brought with them their own rich and vibrant culture. Since the indigenous peoples were essentially destroyed by the colonizers, it is the African influence which has survived to the present day. One tradition that has African roots is the "gro-ka." The gro-ka is a means of expression that includes songs, dance, and instrumental music. Alex Uri explains: "Le symbole et élément central de cet art sont représentés par le tambour 'ka'" (32) [The central symbol and element of this art are represented by the drum 'ka'].[4] When Jean-Baptiste Labat visited the Caribbean islands during the turn of the eighteenth century, he observed and wrote about a scene of music and dance involving the drum:

Celui qui touche le tambour bat avec mesure et posément, mais celui qui touche le bamboula bat le plus vite qu'il peut et sans presque garder la mesure. Et comme le son qu'il rend est beaucoup moindre que celui du grand tambour, et fort aigu, il ne sert qu'à faire du bruit sans marquer la cadence, ni les mouvements des danseurs.

Les danseurs sont disposés sur deux lignes, les uns devant les autres, les hommes d'un côté et les femmes de l'autre. Ceux qui sont las de danser et les spectateurs, font un cercle autor des danseurs et des tambours. Le plus habile chante une chanson qu'il compose sur le champ, sur tel sujet qu'il juge à propos, dont le refrain, qui est chanté par tous les spectateurs, est accompagné de grands battements de mains. A l'égard des danseurs, ils tiennent les bras à peu près comme ceux qui dansent en jouant des castagnettes. Ils sautent, ils font des vires voltes, s'approchent à deux ou troix pieds, les uns des autres, c'est-à-dire les hommes contre les femmes. (qtd. in Uri 33)

He who plays the drum beats with regularity and steadiness, but he who plays the bamboula beats as quickly as he can and almost without regard to the meter. And as the sound that he produces is much softer than that of the large drum, and more intense, it doesn't serve but to make noise without marking the cadence or the movements of the dancers.

The dancers are situated in two lines, one in front of the other, the men on one side and the women on the other. Those who are too tired to dance, and the spectators, make a circle around the dancers and drums. The most skillful person sings a song which he composes on the field, on such a subject that he judges to be appropriate, in which the refrain, sung by all the spectators, is accompanied by a large beating of the hands. In regard to the dancers, they have their arms somewhat close like those who dance playing the castanets. They jump, they make rapid back and forth movements, they approach within two or three feet of one another, that is to say the men opposite the women.

Uri points out that although this is not the description of a musicologist, from this account we learn something about the improvisation of the singers, the call and response form of the songs, and the choreography of the dances. We also see how the drum keeps the beat and interacts with the bamboula, and we sense the intensity, vitality, and color of the singers, dancers, instrumentalists, and spectators as they coordinate with one another in their respective performances.

While the quadrille represents the culture of the colonizer and can therefore be associated with Hegel's Absolute, or thesis, the gros-ka, one form of African-influenced dance, can be affiliated with the colonized and can be connected with the Other, or antithesis. In the Caribbean, the quadrille and gros-ka became intertwined in a synthesis that transcended their initial tension, thereby merging two important cultures that existed in the Caribbean: European and African. In *World Music* it is explained that the Caribbean is an area of "cross-fertilization and change" and that the music there "might have started out as a product of African and European roots on individual islands, but the soil has been continually mixed and enriched by further transplants from within the Caribbean and beyond" (Broughton 473). Thus, the European quadrille and the African-influenced gros-ka evolved into the creole quadrille, and this synthesis was influenced by colonizers from Europe who brought their culture to the inhabitants of the land.

Most colonizers had the desire to "civilize" or "cultivate" the indigenous people they encountered. In the early seventeenth century, Samuel de Champlain wrote to King Louis XIII about his voyages and discoveries in New France. He said of the indigenous peoples: "[T]hey are not savages to such an extent that they could not in course of time and through association with others become civilized and cultivated" (264). There was a desire to teach and train the people to be more like the French. In fact, Champlain is explicit in this motive and states:

This is an occasion for increasing in us our long-cherished desire to send communities and colonies there, to teach the people the knowledge of God, and inform them of the glory and triumphs of your Majesty, so that together with the French language they may also acquire a French heart and spirit, which next to the fear of God, will be inspired with nothing so ardently as the desire to serve you. (264-65)

The quest to "civilize" the people to be like the French both on the exterior and on the interior is apparent, and this attitude was not limited to the French. In 1835, Thomas Babington Macaulay, in "Minute on Indian Education" promoted English education in India, saying that natives who were "Indian in blood and colour" would become "English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (qtd. in Loomba 85). Here again, the intent was to transform the people from their original condition to what Europeans considered to be a more elevated state.[5]

When Labat visited the Caribbean and described in detail some of his observations and experiences, he acknowledged the love the African slaves had for dance and wrote: "La danse est leur passion favorite" (206) [Dance is their favorite passion]. He did not believe that there were people anywhere else in the world who were so attached to dancing. Yet he found their danses "indécentes" [indecent] and "lascives" [lascivious] (207). He explained that to divert the people from doing such vile dances, they were taught some French dances such as the minuet, the courant, and others. This is another example of Europeans seeking to "civilize" a more "savage" population and to share/impose their culture on the people. Yet the people eventually embraced some of these dances and integrated them into their own culture.

So when Europeans colonized the Caribbean, one of their contributions was European dance, and included among the different styles taught was the quadrille. Félix Proto writes in his preface of *Musiques et musicians de la Guadeloupe*:

Dans la perspective de la celebration de la rencontre des deux Mondes, c'est pour moi, homme politique mais également musicien, un privilège de présenter un ouvrage qui décrit la musique comme un instrument de conquête, comme un vecteur idéologique, mais également comme un facteur de paix et d'intégration. (5)

From the perspective of the celebration of the meeting of two worlds, as a politician as well as a musician, it is a privilege for me to present a work that describes music as an instrument of conquest, as an ideological vector, as well as an agent of peace and integration.

There is no effort to hide the role music as culture played as an "instrument of conquest" on one hand, and on the other, it is viewed as an "agent of peace and integration." This corresponds with Hegel's dialectic in which the thesis can be acknowledged, countered, and synthesized. In fact, one of the sections of the book on music in Guadeloupe is called "Le quadrille, une synthèse de la culture fraçaise et créole" (58) [The Quadrille: A Synthesis of French and Creole Culture].

In relation to this synthesis, Desmond Clarke, in an online article on the quadrille, answers the following question. Why would descendants of Africans practice a dance of European origin? Martha Ellen Davis writes that there was a debate by nationalist movements in the 1970s that questioned whether or not the quadrille should be considered Guadeloupean at all because of the "European influence" (878). Clarke provides three distinct reasons why the quadrille is important to the people of the Caribbean. First, like learning the foreigner's language, it was initially out of force and then necessity. He compares dancing to speaking, and says that it is believed that "dancing was the first language." Dance would have been part of the African's way of life. Second, the quadrille was something that was passed down to him and his people, and third, dancing the quadrille "is a constant reminder of the resilience that our ancestors displayed in the face of adversities" and of "the mental and physical battles that they fought to free themselves." He suggests that "we, too, can relieve ourselves of mental slavery." Although the quadrille represents the culture of the colonizer, it also incorporates elements of slave culture, and becomes a means of expression not only of pleasure, but of survival.

Clarke also explains that in Jamaica, when the colonizers learned that Africans used "music and dance to communicate," including ways to escape, they forbade Africans to "practice their culture." However, at times the colonizers needed Africans to help provide music for the social events, which enabled that Africans to learn the music and dances of the English farmers. When they explored the dance on their own, they added their own flavor and accents that developed into a unique style. So the dance that originally came from Europe, was eventually altered, changed, and synthesized with their own music and dance forms. Clarke lists specific benefits of

dancing the quadrille and points out that it "nurtures the spirit of participation and cooperation; increases concentration span; improves dexterity; builds confidence; develops awareness of posture and coordination; [and] increases one's ability to observe, listen and absorb information."[6] There is a sense of resolution in his tone; he acknowledges the colonizer and the colonized, and their respective roles, but he portrays a sense of acceptance and optimism. It is through the quadrille that both the thesis and antithesis are mediated, and the result is a pleasing and desirable synthesis.

In 1962, Alan Lomax went to the Caribbean to conduct musical research and make field recordings. In the liner notes for the CD, *Caribbean Sampler,* we learn that he "saw his musical research as a way of finding cultural commonalities that would support the dream of postcolonial Caribbean unity" (n.pag.). As he went from island to island he observed certain similarities and a "common creole style." Years after he had recorded this specific music, he wrote the following to a colleague: "Having looked at the music of the whole world, no small area is more tightly knit in its musical culture than the Antilles." Some of the commonalities "found almost everywhere" were "[c]reolized versions of European figured dances such as the quadrille."

For an example of quadrille music performed in the Caribbean in the 1960s, see his field recording of "Lecamille" (*Caribbean Sampler* #12). This particular piece is an haute-taille, which means "high waist" in French, and is named for a dress with a high waist that was popular at one time at quadrille dances in Martinique and some of the other islands. It consists of four figures (*le pantalon*, *l'été*, *la poule*, and *pastourelle*), and sometimes a fifth figure is added. Instruments such as an accordion, violin, guitar, and percussion are typically used. The caller, or *commandeur,* plays an important role and constantly guides dancers with directions and commands. In the notes it is explained that "the quadrille, a popular nineteenth-century figured dance from Western Europe, has been a target of creolization in many parts of the former colonial world, from the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean to the Caribbean." So here as well we find resolution and mediation of the thesis and antithesis through dance, particularly the quadrille.

A classic example of the integration of the European quadrille and African-influenced Caribbean dance can be found in Simone Schwarz-Bart's play, *Ton beau capitaine.* The quadrille, a symbol of the European colonizer, is integrated into the culture of the colonized in such a way that it becomes a complex and sophisticated means of expression for the oppressed. In the play, Wilnor Baptiste, a poor black Haitian man in his thirties who is an agricultural worker, dances in various passages. Regarding the performance of traditional dances in the play, Schwarz-Bart, a Guadeloupean, explains that "leur fonction est dramatique" [their function is dramatic], they should express "les divers moments d'un drame individuel" (8) [the various moments of an individual drama], and they should provide "une langue supplémentaire" [a supplemary language] that exposes the main character.

Wilnor is separated from his wife, Marie-Ange, who sends him cassette tapes of her voice instead of letters, because he is illiterate. In one of her tapes she begs him to return home. He left to seek his fortune in Guadeloupe, and she says: "[R]eviens,

reviens, mon cher Wilnor, même si c'est sans le terrain et la vache" (18-19) [(R)eturn, return, my dear Wilnor, even if it is without land and a cow]. He has lied, however, and told her he is fat as a pig and lives in a house with a porch and columns, when in reality, he resides in a modest hut (15).

In the play, dance and music are a significant comfort and means of expression for Wilnor. Donald M. Morales explains: "The interdependence of music/dance/gesture to language is strong in African, Caribbean, and African drama. By listening carefully to the musician and writer from these cultures, one can discern this connectivity" (150). He also suggests that both music and dance in this play "function as organic elements, which not only move the play, but act as additional characters." Wilnor says: "[C]e sont les dieux d'Afrique qui ont inventé le tambour, pour nous donner une consolation" (24) [(I)t is the Gods of Africa who invented the drum, to give us consolation.] During the play, he becomes upset after hearing his wife's voice on the tape, because she speaks of intimacies with another man. He records his own voice and speaks to his wife, and lies telling her of other women in his life.

During this difficult time, abiding in poverty and loneliness, the notes are heard of a "joyeux quadrille créole" [joyous creole quadrille] (42). His attitude changes, his body begins to move, and with the music and movement Wilnor becomes happy and immerses himself momentarily in song and dance. He performs "le quadrille en compagnie de trois partenaires invisibles. Parfois il soutient gaillardement de la voix le commandeur" (43) [the quadrille in the company of three invisible partners. Sometimes he merrily follows the voice of the commander]. The quadrille, which is meant to be a social experience, is his solitary expression. It is, in a sense, his escape from poverty and separation as he joyfully imagines someone calling the moves and pretends to participate with other partners. In his dance there are five figures, and after each figure there is a pause. Between reprises he calls out words or phrases, such as "aïe, les petites négresses à falbalas" [aye, the little negro women] and "les petites mulâtresses zinzin" (the little mulatto women] (43), suggesting that he has had relationships with other women.

In *On Art, Religion, Philosophy,* Hegel writes that sometimes a man lives "in two contradictory worlds" (85). He suggests that "on the one side, we see man a prisoner in common reality and earthly temporality, oppressed by want and poverty, hard driven by nature, entangled in matter, in sensuous aims and their enjoyments." In the play, Wilnor is certainly oppressed by not only want and poverty but also loneliness, and he lies to his wife about relationships with other women. Hegel continues to explain,

> On the other side, [man] exalts himself to eternal ideas, to a realm of thought and freedom, imposes on himself as a *will* universal laws and attributions, strips the world of its living and flourishing reality and dissolves it into abstractions, inasmuch as the mind is put upon vindicating its rights and its dignity simply by denying the rights of nature and maltreating it, thereby retaliating the oppression and violence which itself has experienced from nature. (emphasis in original)

Wilnor, especially in dancing the creole quadrille, delves momentarily into more abstract, imaginary realms, and in so doing seeks and experiences freedom from his

state of oppression, poverty, and loneliness. However, when the dance ends, so does his temporary merriment. In the stage directions, Schwarz-Bart writes:

> Après chacun de ces bouts de phrase le quadrille repart comme avant; donc cinq arrêts et cinq reprises. Mais soudain c'est un arrêt définitif, musique et danse, et lui-même stoppé en plein élan se retrouve sur un pied, face à la salle, ses traits joyeux métamorphosés en un étrange masque de douleur, yeux fermés et bouche entrouverte. Obscurité. (43-44)
>
> After each end of the phrase the quadrille returns as before; thus five stops and five reprises. But suddenly there is a final stop of music and dance, and he stops in flight and lands on foot, facing the room. His joyous traits metamorphose into a strange mask of pain. His eyes are closed and his mouth half open. Darkness.

Wilnor declares: "Quel beau quadrille: un peu plus et je m'envolais" (47) [What a beautiful quadrille: a little more and I would have flown away.]

In this play, Wilnor undergoes a transformation while he is dancing the quadrille, a contribution of the colonizer. It is a dance that is not exactly what the Europeans introduced to his ancestors, because it has undergone a synthesis that includes the physical and emotional expression of his own people. It does not reflect a sense of oppression, but rather of liberation, not of being encaged, but of the ability to freely fly away. In fact, he has decided how he will deal with his wife and her other man; he records on the cassette: "En vérité, en vérité, je t'ai menti, moi-même je t'ai menti, petit oiseau . . . . Depuis que je suis à la Guadeloupe, si tu veux savoir, jamais non, c'est drôle à dire, drôle, jamais il n'y a eu aucune femme sur ma plancher" (48) [In truth, in truth, I lied to you, I lied to you, little bird. . . . Since I have been in Guadeloupe, if you want to know, never, it is boring to say, boring, never was there a woman on my floor] (48). The play ends with the sound of a highly accented drum with Wilnor doing a dance that is both "très brève" [very short] and "violente" [passionate] (58).

Thus, the art form of dance has played a major role in helping to unify and synthesize the opposing forces of the colonizer and the colonized. The European quadrille, which was imported by the colonizer, became intermingled with the dance practices of the colonized, and evolved into the creole quadrille.[7] In this way, the first is preserved and retained in the Other, and the latter with its integrated creole qualities becomes the truth of the former. The end, in a sense, is thereby wound back to the beginning. Leo Tolstoy writes: "Art is . . . a means of union among men" (51).[88] Tolstoy also suggests: "Art is a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he had lived through, and that other people are infected by these feelings and also experience them" (51). Certainly Wilnor, through gestures and dance, evokes his own feelings of isolation, loneliness, longing, disappointment, and discouragement as well as a temporary sense of ecstasy, jubilation, and hope.

Notes and References

1 See also Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth.*

2 In *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics*, Bart Moore-Gilbert acknowledges the power and influence of Said's *Orientalism* but also presents a critique of it. He writes: "Said's acknowledgement of a dichotomy within Western representations of the non-West in fact recurs throughout his text" (44).

3 Moore-Gilbert notes that in *Orientalism*, Said frequently makes sweeping generalizations concerning a wide variety nations and peoples (45). Thus, to more effectively and fairly address colonial and postcolonial themes, it is important to be less general and more specific.

4 All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

5 In Schwarz-Bart's novel *Pluie et vent sur Télumée miracle*, students at the colonial school were taught about the significance of France in their lives. The protagonist recounts, "Nous étions à l'abri, apprenant à lire, à signer notre nom, à respecter les couleurs de la France, notre mère, à vénérer sa grandeur et sa majesté, sa noblesse, sa gloire qui remontaient au commencement des temps, lorsque nousn'étions encore que des singes à queue coupée" (83) [We were in the shelter, learning to read, to sign our name, to respect the colors of France, our mother, to worship her grandeur and her majesty, her nobility, her glory which rose at the beginning of time, because were nothing more than monkeys without a tail.]

6 See a photo of the JANUKA Quadrille Dancers and Singers on the program of *The Will to Survive: The Transatlantic Slave Trade*, Bicentenary Event, sponsored by King's College London < http://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/03/05/90/Willtosurvive- Programme1.pdf>.

7 Kathleen Gyssels writes of the significance of the play as an expres sion of *créolité*, or " creoleness," and of the challenge of capturing it on stage. She writes: Without explanatory notes, translations, or paraphrases, creole words and creolisms remind the (non-creolophone) spectator that Schwarz-Bart's primary audience is creolophone and that *créolité* is very difficult to stage. Authentic *créolité* can be best observed in marketplaces and in backyards; as soon as it is staged or written down, it is reduced to some artificial reproduction. (244) Although the dance in this play is also staged, and therefore reduced in some way to an artificial reproduction, it interacts with the creole words and other creolisms to express the cross-cultural world of the Caribbean. Uri, Alex, and Françoise Uri. *Musiques et Musiciens de la Guadeloupe: le chant de Karukéra.* Paris: Con Brio, 1991.

> Despite the tension, troubles, inequity, and feelings of *malaise* that may have existed between the colonizer and the colonized, dance acts as a capable mediator that helps to bring about a synthesis of the thesis and antithesis. Although it does not solve all the problems or difficulties that have existed between the two sides, it provides a space in which the two can become one. This interpolation is evidenced in the creole quadrille which, despite its European and colonial influence, serves as a symbol of freedom and flight for the inhabitants of the Caribbean.

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Kamala Markandaya's Indian Women : *The Principles and the Principals* : A Feministic Elucidation

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I. Introduction

Literature has relentlessly been a dexterous contraption in scrutinizing the gender associations and sexual discriminations. And a re-reading of literature becomes all the more momentous and really priceless because it facilitates the reader to get the reconstitution of the female subjectivity. Everyone has now come to accept that disparity of the sexes is not a biological occurrence; neither is it a divine decree but a capricious cultural construct to maneuver the professional performance of the society for substantiating the advantages of men. Hence women writers center their creativity on two concerns a propos to women—smash certain hypotheses related to women which are all-inclusive in aspect and stand and design a female standpoint on matters involving the encounters of women and their inestimable and sustaining contribution to culture. Simone de Beavoir is therefore unswerving in his declaration: "One is not born, but rather a woman … it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature". (Beauvoir, 301) Anita Myles endorses the identical viewpoint and writes: "Most of the attempts to define what it is to be a woman, assume a universal connotation in that woman is considered more as a product of cultural norms and restraints rather than as a creation of nature".(Myles, i) She adds that woman is a quarry of financial and cultural hassles. Female scholarship deconstructs the social spin of gender and the corollary effect of that construct demystifying the cultural paradigms associated with it. The question now arises as regards the status and the liberation of women. It is therefore binding to re-interpret their status, revamp the entire social system and redefine their roles. As such, "if a woman is defined as a sexual being that exists for another, then she can be liberated only by redefinition of the very norms of gender identity—a process which requires a radical change in society that produced such norms". (Mackimon, 533)

The feminist discernment has given a fresh ardour and animation to literary studies and unveiled some of the prejudices at work in the time-honored fashion since the significance and clout of women relative to men's remains more or less inert. Elaine Showalter is vindicated in making the wrapping up: "The female literary tradition comes from the still evolving relationship between women writers and their society".(Showalter, 12) An all-embracing scrutiny of the women authors expounds the fact that these writers creatively and collectively react to an unexceptional social pragmatism. The humid wits of women in a 'patriarchal' society are due to their economic dependence on men. Such a conclusion leads to the portrayal mostly of women of just two kinds: women who are tame and the other extreme, who are ferocious, sexy and fanatical. The self-referential focal point of the post modern "inner sensibility" writers with self-presentation contests the earlier views and deliberation of most women writers. To cite an instance, the "neurotic" representation of a woman, like Maya of Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*, earlier misinterpreted as abnormal and erratic reaction to the assumed adverse environmental influences around the individual, has now become implicit as a strong and sustaining feedback, illuminating her sensitive and exclusive union with others and also the affirmation of her distinctiveness.

The trouncing of women in a patriarchal set-up also depends upon the class, caste or race to which they fit in and hence in order to prod the consciousness or the rejoinder of a woman belonging to a specific caste, class or race, the reader needs to take into account the ethnicity and the social constraints of the environment.

Such a debate should not hoodwink the reader to reckon that women are victims without even an iota of protest. They, in fact, emerge victorious, at least in most cases, though not in all, by their sheer resolve, standpoint and stoical stance of nourishment. Such a wielding of their power and influence and creating a tradition of their own, may, perhaps, be informal and invisible but integrated in accomplishment.

Gerda Lerner's deliberation is terse: "While men conquered territory and built institutions which managed and distributed power, women transmitted culture to the young and built the network and infrastructures that provide continuity in the community (Lerner 52)".

Even a perfunctory version of the significant creative production of the post colonial novels in English brings out the evolutionary formula clearly discernable in the Indian society and its women conclusively epitomize in the classic shift of the women characters from "feminine" to "female". This is an overtone of the theory expounded by Elaine Showalter regarding assorted phases of the twentieth century women liberation movement.(Showalter, 13) The first segment involves *imitation* of the current crushing tradition and *internalizing* its ideas and concepts. In the next stage, women begin *protesting* these crunching shackles and begin *advocating* for their autonomy. In the last and concluding phase, a turning-inward phase, the phase of *self-discovery*, women search their own minds seeking identity of their own.

II. Indian Literary Domains

Novel, as a genre, is central in proliferating the perception since it is closer and treasured by people and society. As A.S. Dasan writes, "the novel has often reflected the society in which it finds itself. It has also indicated that it has the propensity to make enduringly valid statements on life…..has sustained

a sense of contemporaneous till date all over the world."(Dasan, 17) He adds that the novelist has categorically certain empathy with identifiable humanistic perspectives in tune with the aesthetics of his ethnicity.

The Indian literary customs have loose story-telling narratives in fictional designs for ages as part of Indian civilization. Indian fictional narratives, in general, sculpt happenings in life into stories, and such narratives are one way of perceiving ourselves and the world around us. Indian fictional faculty is familiar with mimetic imitation and aesthetic evaluation of the stimuli and the inferences of what life consists of and what it vindicates. Using language as a synchronic machination, it transports substance by indirection and allusion. The mind behind an Indian work of art is a sanitizing and critiquing mind. It appraises human contemplation which is the groundwork of human passions and actions. It assists the reader in yearning towards consolidating the resolution between the material and spiritual even in the midst of disjointed experiences and impaired civilizations. A.S. Dasan writes: "While embracing life experiences within its narratology, Indian literature in general, has maintained a holistic approach juxtaposing the surface features of the text with a sense of interiorization."(Dasan 22)

III. Indian Women Novelists

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar's axiomatic expression is quite curt and justifiably authenticated: "Women are natural story tellers even when they don't write or publish."(Iyengar 435) The first cohort of Indian women writers in English dwelt on specialties, with explosive indulgences, such as the co-existence of post colonial reminiscence, the neo colonial perception and also the post modernist revivalism. The succeeding age band of women novelists has adjusted their voices to the altered psychological pragmatism of Indian life after independence. Women novelists like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Shoba De, Bharati Mukherjee and Ruth Prawar Jhabvala go well with this group. They aver through their exposé that to assuage the affliction of women, the society needs a mammoth transformation. These writers also take up cudgels against a multitude of cultural, political and social trepidations. Their mission and vision are based on the convergence of their consciousness and the world at large. Therefore the women characters symbolize subsistence and progress as well as debility, alienation, putrefaction and mortality. Though egalitarianism and autonomy are their tenets, these Indian women are clued-up that there is no clear-cut single solution or a smooth way out of the humiliating state of affairs.

The women writers are also sensitive that there are deep-seated dissimilarities in predicaments relating to women belonging to developed nations and those belonging to underdeveloped nations. While the former women's issues relate to uniqueness, job equality and the sexual roles, the latter's distress is mere survival. Even the few well-settled and reasonably better placed individuals are fatalities of the detrimental centuries-old traditions. But the most common sought after benchmark is the mission for deliverance of women irrespective of the outcome.

Hence the examination of the post modern Indian women novelists impinge on the feminine insight of the women characters, their progression towards a stirred consciousness that leads to fortification of their inner self in a male dominated society. This self introspection leading to self judgment leads to their conception of the implicit inner potency. This vigor protracts them throughout when they adorn different dimensional roles in society—mother, sister, wife, daughter etc. They are rendered as cultural backbones of the family. Such an attitude and analysis leads these writers to conceive protagonists who belong to one of the following clusters: women of the first brand are hyper sensitive individuals inept to cope with the environment around them and the tussle and the mismatch drag them to the inevitable catastrophe—entry into the blind and the no-return path of neurosis. Women of the second set are mute victims and their throbbing transforms them into idealists. Women belonging to the third breed are adept in identifying and admitting the new and important knowledge about themselves as a consequence of their suffering and this awareness or realization make them 'sober' in outlook and thus they reach a kind of 'fulfilment' in their relationship with the planet. These women could fine-tune well within and outside their bounds by developing value systems of their own and moreover, their inner resources empower them to defy the irrational social system.

IV. Kamala Markandaya's Main Indian Women

The impression of Indian womanhood is as assorted as the country itself and has undergone dramatic and sweeping makeovers from era to era. Despite the fact that the antique styles of persecution such as child marriage and sati are on their way out, "the air of 'freedom' which touches the women is like the kite flying yet, being stringed into the manipulative and maneavouring hands of their men."(Singh, I.P. 8) Kamala Markandaya has vividly presented the scuffle and also the muscle of the Indian women ranging from peasants to the royal families. But the fusing imaginings that associate them are the search for the sovereignty of the self, familial commitments and the fellow feeling towards men and women in society. But such a fellow feeling forces these women to challenge several obstacles because of the imperfect and incompatible social evils and corrupt practices coupled with economic difficulties. But such altercations lead these women to mellowness in stance and revelation. They never become cynical at any stage in stumbling upon the battle between the pursuit for independent lifestyle and the nurturance and, in fact, never lose hope.

Kamala Markandaya's novels are in search of affirmative resolution for unenthusiastic state of affairs. It is true that she pictures the negative or gloomy facets in Indian women's lives, but there are positive signals that togetherness and mutual understanding could work wonders in making a meaningful existence.

Rukmani's character in *Nectar in a Sieve* is intended in such a way that there is a gradual emergence from the plane of innocence to experience and in

other words, from mutiny to concurrence. When Rukmani reached her husband's place, she could see only a mud hut: "Rukmani wanted to cry. Merely a mud hut and nothing else…and she sank down."(Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 50) But better sense prevails upon her when she learns that the hut was built by Nathan himself with his own hands and began to admire him. She had the maturity to say, "A woman, they say, always remembers her wedding night, ….but for me there are other nights….when I went to my husband matured in mind as well in body." (Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 66) she was also a prudent and sensible housewife. Her friends Kali and Janaki taught her and made her well versed in all chores relating to a peasant's wife. Nathan was surprised enough to admire the vision of Rukmani when she produced so much store of money, rice and dhal for Ira's marriage. A true helpmate, she assisted her husband on the field. Rukmani's audacity, fortitude, ingenuity and the serene tolerance of her lot are well exploited. Regarding the scarcity of food, she says: "Want is our companion from birth to death, varying only in degree. What profit to bewail that which has always been and cannot change? (Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 113)" Even at the greatest moment of physical and emotional crisis, Rukmani has the determination to console her husband: "Have we not been happy to-gether? Always, dear, always." (Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 110) Time is a great healer and with the passing of time, Rukmani could review her life, "…with calm of mind with all passion spent. (Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 135)" R.A. Singh writes: "Rukmani's spiritual stamina, heroic impulse, love-like simplicity, love for her children, tolerance and respect for traditional values make her an outstanding character." (Singh, R.A, 6) She is an archetypal figure figurative of the anguished soul of India through the ages. She is the accomplishment of India's consecrated convention and as A.V. Krishna Rao puts it, "the real truth of the novel is the spiritual stamina of Rukmani."(6) Thus Rukmani is an admirable picture of stoicism and resilience. Ira, the daughter of Rukmani, has also the reverberation of grit: "….to-night and to-morrow and every night; so long as there is need. I will not hunger any more." (Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 137) Rukmani corroborates her: "She was no longer a child, to be cowed or forced into submission, but a grown woman with a definite purpose and an invincible determination." (Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, 138)

The social order shifts from the rural setting in *Nectar in a Sieve* to an urbanized culture in *Some Inner Fury*. Mira, the upper middle class woman, is torn between passion and India's independence. Though relatively free, when she grows rapidly, several boundaries are forced on her—not allowed to travel alone, cannot swim with Kit and Richard and cannot stay with Roshan alone. But Mira smashes them down and engrosses herself in many social dealings. But the unregulated independence could give her only a sense of restiveness. The aspiration for perspicuity makes her cross the bounds of the family and she now grasps the perils of rampant freedom: "It was out; the uncertainty, one's helplessness, the fear, the despair, never allowed into the consciousness but always existing there." (Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, 165) The deep rooted

forces of convention check her from trespassing. Markandaya's memorandum is clear—no roots, no survival. Thus the impermanence of negative freedom drags her back to the roots, a show of matured thinking: "To keep our peace we would have to go back then to the world from which we came, to which we could always return because it is a part of us even as the earth was of those others who stayed." (Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, 192) Roshan is all in one—forthright, erudite, endowed and progressive. Her conception of freedom is universal—national and global—and thus a role model for other women. Mira is so much refreshing to Roshan: "She gave me a chance to go and I took it….I uncovered at last the gateway to the freedom of the mind, and gazed entranced upon the vista of endless extensions of which the spirit is capable." (Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, 49) Premala champions the traditional Indian woman who fails to transmute her entreaty for brazenness into her daily life. A culturally nonconformist woman, she is an indecisive character.

In the words Shanta Krishnaswamy: "In Premala, the author shows the insecurity, isolation, bewilderment and vulnerability that the traditionally brought up Indian woman feels, when she has to adjust to western norms of living, when she has to accommodate to tastes and values of a culture in flux….she tries to be an ideal wife and companion to her husband. She ends up being a non-person and her death puts a stop to her desperate adjustments, to her soul shrinking compromises.(188)"

Thus Premala is a woman of customary Indian model, Mira, a modern woman with an insightful penchant for Indian culture and Roshan is a pictogram of enlightened progressive womanhood. The continual motif is conformity of tradition and a judicious espousal of progressive modernity.

Sarojini of *A Silence of Desire* is a mainstream middle class orthodox Hindu housewife, having her own conventions of livelihood. The novel itself is about the longstanding dichotomy of head and heart, emotion and reason. Dandekar tries to wean Sarojini away from superstitions and sacraments, whereas she wants him to disregard western notions and see 'what lies beyond reason'. She is: "…good with her children, an excellent cook, an efficient manager of the household, a woman who still gave him pleasure after fifteen years of marriage…she did most things placidly…and from this calm proceeded the routine and regularity that met the neat and orderly needs or his nature." (Markandaya, *A Silence of Desire*, 6) Her rendezvous with the Swamy seeking a cure for her illness is within the sanctions of the tradition and society in which she exists. Sarojini proclaims: "Without faith, I shall not be healed." (Markandaya, *A Silence of Desire*, 82) Dandekar, her husband, becomes suspicious as regards her visits to Swamy, but at long last, while recuperating from his illness, realizes that he wants her because of a "spiritual ingrowing which made it impossible for him to be whole so long as any part of her was missing." (Markandaya, *A Silence of Desire*, 115) Sarojini, on her part, is happy to bring back together herself with the 'hard reality' of the family after she has recorded her voice of dissent against the repression unleashed by the institution of family. She becomes cognizant that within the ambit of society

and tradition, she could voice her protests without shirking her duties and responsibilities. She is an emissary of the 'new and revolutionary' Indian women in the making.

In *Possession,* two women, Lady Caroline Bell and Anasuya, warrant our interest. Anasuya, the traditional Indian woman is uncommunicative, civilized, gifted, beneficial and spiritually informed and in the words of Shanta Krishnaswamy, "Anasuya is capable of a decent respectable existence as a woman of means …in the ilk as Mira and Roshan, who prove that a decent existence is possible without a man…they have evolved a long way from the likes of Nalini and Rukmani."(Krishnaswamy 103) Caroline, the English lady, is chilly, fanatical, egotistical and mercenary. Uma Parameswaran writes: "Lady Caroline Bell is an autocrat, typical of the British Raj in India." (115) These two embody clatter of not only persona but also customs.

Nalini of *A Handful of Rice* is a vulnerable prey and the grounds are multifold in nature—economic scarcity, traditional mooring and the compulsory choice between morality and success ethics. But she plays the sheet anchor role in the novel. She gives a personality to Ravi, the renegade vagrant, by marrying him. She buttresses and nourishes him in times of adversity as well as prosperity and also counsels rightly when Ravi is not in a position to make his choice between fidelity and ferocity i.e. veracity and success ethics. But being a woman of tradition and bound by the laws of custom and manners, she cannot break free and thus, has to bear the tortures and torments silently: "Nalini never complained…but he had never heard her complain. Neither of the ills of her pregnancy, nor of him." She would say, "We'll manage." (Markandaya, *A Handful of Rice*, 165) For the sake of family and also its members, she favours forbearance and endurance.

It is germane at this stage to draw an analogy between Nalini and Rukmani. Both are impoverished and unsanctioned women meeting head-on calamities thrust upon them by discriminatory social order. But both are compliant and hence remain mute fatalities and do not even question the moral depravity of their husbands. By delineating these breeds of women, Kamala Markandaya seems to connote that only women should be drawn against the trials in families to nourish them irrespective of the twinge or abrasions they receive in doing so.

K.S. Narayana Rao says: "Markandaya's novels ….reveal a spectrum of moral attitudes on the part of the characters…which include the traditionally moral, immoral and the amoral attitudes…And her women characters…are, in fact, better drawn than their male counterparts…it is usually the men who get away with their delinquent sexual conduct." (69-70)

Hence Nalini's visible debility is actually her asset because she deems family bonds and personal relationships, more than anything else, to be absolute importance. This is also Kamala Markandaya's inflexible conviction.

Vasantha of *The Nowhere Man* is steadfastly fastened in Indian tradition. A staunch believer and disciple of Gandhi, she could pilot a modest life

eschewing opulence even in an alien land, England. Her strong religious belief makes her cruise through successfully the turbulences that include racial prejudices in England, sociological changes and rough feelings emanating from generation gap and thus develop a strong faith in mankind. Though a little traumatized because her son, Laxman, marries an English girl, she stoically bears all physical and emotional smarting. About Vasantha, Markandaya verbalizes: "Vasantha was a Hindu, born and bred in a subtle religion, whose concepts, being on the cosmic scale, made no concessions to puny mankind; a religion that postulated one God, infinite, resplendent, with a thousand different aspects but one: God the Creator, preserver, destroyer union with whom was the supreme purpose and bliss." (Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, 17) Her concept of happy life could generate in her contentment even in the last instant: "It has been a happy marriage." (Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, 35) That's why, Srinivas, becomes stranded and 'nothingness' creeps into him after Vasantha's death to transmute him crestfallen.

Amma, Aunt Alamelu and Saroja of *Two Virgins* hang about on one side demonstrating the dictum that while acknowledging the shifting social codes due to the contract of western ideals of life, it is only decent to linger ingrained in compliance to tradition. The moral codes and the individual conduct should never be sacrificed in the misconceived notion of modernization. But Lalitha is an atypical, inclined towards a western way of life. Her mind set that the traditional society is asphyxiating and her false ideas about modernity, coupled with obstinacy and fickle minded nature burst her bubble of misconstrued pride in her beauty, feminine desirability and sexual power. In fact, Saroja matures steadily from the bad practices and experiences of Lalitha and could only conclude that only the woman suffers more and has a greater share in bearing the burden of social evils but men remain as ever scot free, completely unconcerned and unaffected. Markandaya records: "There is no escape for them (women); they had to stand where they were and take it." (Markandaya, *Two Virgins*, 123) But Aunt Alamelu and Amma regard custom and social system above anything else. Margaret P. Joseph writes: "Aunt Alamelu is the rock of tradition, the norm of moral behaviour."(147) They are opposed to anything called liberal as typified by their strong censure of Lalitha's western education at Miss Mendoza's school. Kamala Markandaya's communication is patent—in the search for liberation, women should never be advocated to adopt unlimited and unfettered conduct by throwing to winds the social structure and principles of practice of tradition or convention. They need to be sensible and measure up to the ideals of the tradition bound society.

Queen Manjula and Shanta Devi of *The Golden Honeycomb* are moulded in the same principles but with a few minor diversities. Queen Manjula is gallant, advanced and mercilessly revolutionary in outlook. She is compassionate to her natives unlike the king, her husband. When he becomes incapacitated, she poisons him and against tradition, watches the funeral pyre. She advises her son, the young prince, to have relationship with a common girl, Mohini, to produce a male heir to the throne. But Shanta Devi, her daughter-

in-law is unforthcoming and timid and cannot fight against Manjula, when Mohini is thrust into her life. But, Mohini, even though a commoner, is not taken in by the riches of the royal style and does not surrender her autonomous existence by refusing to marry the prince: "I don't want to be your queen: I want to be free." (Markandaya, *The Golden Honeycomb*, 32) She is thus a foil to Shanta Devi who has no freedom at all. By making use of history, Kamala Markandaya juxtaposes freedom and responsibility and also the slavish submission even in the higher echelons of society.

Kamala Markandaya, perhaps, wishes to suggest in *Pleasure City* that by being strong, the problems of life could be faced challengingly and also overcome by women. Timidity and passivity, the negative traits of most women, need to be replaced with fuel and nurturance in all women. These women are capable of even creating vacuum in their men; Cyrus Contractor missing Zavera and others like Sitaraman, Hablekar and Tully comforting themselves by staring the photographs of their women.

V. Conclusion

Feminism is yet to attain the eminence of a resilient faction in India despite the increase in the number of urban working women. If feminism has the aim of achieving responsible status in society, in a limited measure, it is a success. But as a fight to achieve equality with men, it is too far away from success, at least in this sub continent.

Kamala Markandaya exposés the tribulations, eccentricities and attitudes that victimize Indian womanhood. But the defeat is not total in their struggle for existence or against the inequalities in the social order. The empathy and surrender are their vital components of strength. The two extremes, abject surrender on the one hand and the absolute apathy to death or separation may seem paradoxical. Yet these qualities underscore their inner stamina. Markandaya proclaims that the Indian woman is the pillar with endurance and stoic sense, showcasing a better future through preserving the tradition and guarding the culture. But mere conformity to traditions or a passionate following of modernity are incoherent or treacherous. Kunthi and Lalitha become victims by crossing the bounds of freedom but Mira, at the right moment, checks herself without straying too far. Kamala Markandaya suggests that freedom is to be necessarily tempered with responsibility to achieve advancement and evolution. Her women are branded, though not for making a comprehensive depiction but for offering an in-depth study of the human psyche enmeshed in the values of different hues—social, traditional and spiritual.

A.V. Krishna Rao is candid: Markandaya's contribution to the Indo Anglian fiction lies essentially in her capacity to explore…vital formative areas of individual consciousness that project the images of cultural change and in her uncanny gift of inhabiting the shifting landscapes of an outer reality with human beings whose sensibility becomes a sensitive measure of the inner reality as it responds to the stimulus of change."(67)

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Our First Sin : The Shakespearean Scenario

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Each of the four cycles of Miracle Plays that have come down to us opens with the spectacle of "first sin". This is, of course, the original rebellion of Lucifer, and in each cycle, it receives the fullest emphasis of which a well-conceived dramatic tradition is capable. In Chester Plays, Fall of Lucifer the angelic hierarchies stand around God, the Father, who is shown seated on pagelnt or mansion stage.

1. The Pre-Shakespearean Concept of 'Sin'

When Lucifer falls from his high eminence, he makes a visible descent, and his white and golden garments are changed for the black or horrific mask. In the *Ludus Conventriae*[1], Man is introduced as a principal antagonist. After his fall, Lucifer tempts Eve as he had done the Angels :

Of this apple if thou will bite
Even as God is so shall ye be.
Wise of cunning as I you plight
Like unto God In all degree.
Sun and moon and stars bright
Fish and fowl both sound and sea
At your bidding both day and night
All things shall be in your power.
Ye shall be God's peer.

Fall of Man, 11, 182 ff.

In his rejoinder Adam asserts the penalty of an unlawful claim to equality:

I dare not touch thy band for dread
If that we do this sinful deed
We shall be dead by God's judgement.

11. 221-6.

The nature of the fault has been continually re-emphasised by the symbol of the throne usurped or deserved as the case may be. The Chester cycle develops the symbolism in more detail. Throne becomes the sign of the tyrant who usurps or misuses the power delegated by God and thus reflects the sin of Lucifer.

In the later stages of the Christian myth, the earliest type of usurper is anti-Christ. As the Anti-Christ mounts his throne, we hear :

Cousin of Buckingham !..
Give me thy hands. Thus high by thy advice
And thy assistance, is King Richard seated.

Richard III, iv. ii. 1-5,

The King on his throne has been the most vivid symbol of degree possible in simple theatrical terms and all play wrights, Greeks as well as Christian, who wrote of the act of hubris in a hierarchical society. Later the concept had to deal with relationships between man and woman or parents sod children.

Goneril and Regan, who discuss their father's follies, are likewise the direct descendants of a medieval prototype, that of Cain who denies to Adam the respect which Abel gladly pays.

The Morality plays develop the concept of man's proper 'degree' in the cosmos. In nature, Mankind is led to recognise his place on the ladder between the angels and the beasts. He has the divine gift of understanding and "free election''. Reason is his guide to put him on the proper path. Now, with the steady secularisation of the drama during the sixteenth century, the Christian themes which have been considered so far no longer receive direct dramatic expression.

The primordial "sin" remains rebellion, and the arch-rebels are still Lucifer and Adam, who maintain their principal place in man's imagination until long after *Paradise Lost* was written. Such notions can be watched on their gradual progress from medieval to Renaissance stages.

Although the root was recognised to be rebellion against God, it was the fruit, rebellion against the state, with which the Elizabethan dramatist's imagination was particularly concerned. Sir John Cheke's *The Hurt of Sedition*, addressed to the rebels in Norfolk in 1549, serves as a typical statement. All the medieval horrors at man's rebellion against God was transferred to the very thoughts of his rebellion against the King, and the cumulative pressure of disapproval of any form of rebellion in Tudor England is hard to imagine adequately.

As evident from *Richard II*, the difficulty is pointed out by the Bishop of Carlisle - of finding any one fit to judge a king. The bad man will be seeking his own end if he does so and the good will accept a bad prince as God's own chatisement for the "sins" of the people. In view of the chorus of condemnation, Shakespeare's treatment of the rebels in *Henry IV* is more remarkable.

Shakespeare dramatised the myth of Lucifer's rebellion as the archetype of "sin", and like his contemporaries, found an acceptable manifestation of it in the contemporary history of his own country. The Elizabethans were instructed by both homilists and historians to view the fate of *Richard III* as a supreme example of rebellion and its aftermath. With the exception of the anonymous author of *The True Tragedie of Richard III*, the Elizabethan dramatists found their symbols in more remote and less politically explosive material. Among them Shakespeare alone reconstructed his concept of "sin", "justice" and "redemption" such as his fathers

had found in the Biblical myths out of English history, and the Greeks in the legends of Agamemnon and Oedipus.

The True Tragedie of Richard III (1594) depicts the Luciferian hero's despair and death, related to his own wrong doing with both psychological and artistic skill. *The True Tragedie* brings us to the time when Shakespeare was beginning his own history plays.

II

The Sin of Usurpation

In his tetralogy - the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*, Shakespeare reveals both his traditional attitudes and personal idiosyncrasies which develop continuously through his work. In the tetralogy, he is concerned with "Justice'' and finally with "salvation" or "mercy". Man's "sin", however, is stated not in the terms of the archetypal rebellion of Lucifer, but of its derivative, the general breach of degree, and the "salvation" is presented in political terms as the restoration of order within the state. The tetralogy is not centred on either the usurped crown or the rivalry between a de -facto King and a pretender with dejure rights. The characters - Margaret and Richard of Gloucester in their dynamism and Henry in his quietism - would seek or shun power quite apart from the provocation given by York who of course is activated by dynastic ambition.

The conception of the false king becomes central only in the second tetralogy. In the first, it is a genuine factor in the social disorder, but it is incidental, itself as a consequence of an earlier breach of degree, rather than the cause of later ones. That is, it is the failure to observe "degree" which leads first to faction in the commonwealth and finally to civil war.

The opening scene of both Part I and Part II states the theme. The king is incapable of fulfilling his proper function since he fails to dominate the nobility of his realm, and the nobility in their self-seeking pride cannot unite to govern in his place while he is a child or to support him as a young man. *Part I* informs this breakdown of order to be the direct cause of the defeats in France :

> Messenger : Amongst the soldiers this is mattered,
> That here you meintain several factions
> And whilst a field should be despatch'd and fought,
> You are disputing of your generals.
>
> I.I.70-3.

Later, it is the internecine rivalry between York and Somerset which reduces the gallant and disinterested Talbot to impotence and ultimately causes his death in the French wars. In *Part II*, Duke Humphrey - like Talbot in the first - is first made powerless and then assassinated by a faction of men who unite until he is destroyed and finally attack each other. In *Part III*, the Yorkist faction itself splits and reopens the civil war. Warwick and Clarence were both good Yorkists until they thought it would pay them to be otherwise, just as York had earlier allied himself with the

Lancastrians, Beaufort and Somerset, to gain his own ends. These divisions are quite independent of the -weakness of Henry's title or of Edward's. They stem from the failure of men to fulfil their proper roles, and this failure spreads downwards through society like a rot until fathers and sons murder each other without knowing why, and men believe that seven half-penny loaves ean be had for a penny and that three-hooped pots have been ten hoops (cf : *3 Henry VI*, II. v. and *2 Henry VI*, IV. ii).

The horror of disorder is nowhere more passionately presented than in the Talbot scenes of *1 Henry VI.* IV. iv. 28-35).

The scene between the doomed father and son begins with as solemn music as the last act of *Romeo and Juliet* :

> Talbot : But, 0 malignant and ill-boding stars !
> Now thou art come unto a feast of death,
> A terrible and unavoided danger.
>
> *1 Henry VI*, IV. v. 6-8.

This is admirably designed to suit the playwright's purpose of demonstrating the disastrous results of disunity in the commonwealth, and the visual picture of the dying father with the dead son in his arms at the climax is evidently a foretaste of Shakespeare's later dramaturgy as is the blank-verse at the very outset.

The moral of the whole episode is well-asserted by York's messenger in a soliloquy in Act IV, Scene iii (lines 47-63).

It is noteworthy that Queen Margaret's contribution to the turmoil begins before there is any threat to the Lancastrian title. Her role is not that of a bold woman daring everything to protect the threatened rights of husband or son, but of one who breaks the order appointed by divine law for womankind. In the first place, she is unfaithful to her husband, and this breach of the moral order directly contributes to civil disorder through the jealousy of her favourite Suffolk shown by his rival peers. This is clearly her "first sin", treated in the play in a curious way. No sympathy with adulterous love is ever shown in Shakespeare except in the ambiguous case of Antony and Cleopatra. Margaret is a portentous figure because she brings unusual strength to her evil designs. She brings the same strength to her passion, and Suffolk reciprocates it. At their farewell, the true grief and true love are revealed marvellously :

> Margaret : Go, speak not to me; even now be gone.
> 0, go not yet ! Even thus two friends condemn'd
> Embrace and kiss and take ten thousand leaves,
> Loather a hundred times to part than die.
> Yet now farewell; and farewell life with thee !
>
> *2 Henry V.I*, III, ii, 352-6.

Suffolk, an aggressive bully elsewhere in the play, is given in this scene notes of Borneo's own music :

Suffolk : Well could I curse away a winter's night,
Though standing naked on a mountain top.
For where thou art, there is the world itself,
With every several pleasure in the world,
And where thou art not, desolation.
I can no more.

III, ii, 336-65.

This sympathy for the lovers betrayed by some of those cadences is of course contradictory to the playwright's attitude towards them in their main roles of disruptors of order and degree.

Margaret is further guilty in her attempt to rule the state in the place of the husband whose proper duty this is. Suffolk promises her that after Humphrey's fall :

You yourself shall steer the happy helm.

I, iii, 96.

As a matter of fact, he is proffering a thing both wrong and impossible. On the plain of Tewkesbury she first bitterly condemns her husband and then claims his place herself :

Yet lives our pilot still : Is't meet that he
Should leave the helm and like a fearful lad
With tearful eyes add water to the sea
And give mere strength to that which hath too much,
Whiles, in his moan, the ship splits on the rock,
Which industry and courage might have saved ?
Ah, what a shame ! ah, what a fault were this !..
Why, is not Oxford here another anchor ?
And Somerset another goodly mast ?
The friends of France our shrouds and tacklings ?
And, though unskilful, why not Ned and I
For once allowed the skilful pilot's charge ?

3 Henry Vl,V, iv, 6-20

This is the wanton and ruthless challenge to superior forces that follows ensures the murder pf both son and husband. In her ambition to rule, before provoking the battle at Tewkesbury, she had broken the compromise between Henry and York, which could have been prevented.

Ultimately, Margaret not only fights but kills, and she herself inaugurates the terrible pattern of murder for vengeance, which makes the end of her story so horrific. She has already instigated the murder of Humphrey, but with the hypocritical decency of concealment. The murder of York is openly gang vengeance in lieu of justice, and she herself participates in it :

Margaret : What, weeping - ripe, my Lord Northumberland ? Think but upon the wrong he did us all.
Clifford : Here's for my oath, here's for my father's death.
(Stabbing him
Margaret : And here's to right our gentle-hear ted king.
(Stabbing him

I, iv, 172-6.

The main cause to the disasters of his reign is however Henry's own. Unlike Margaret he makes no violent breaches in the social order. His "sin" is the negative one refusing the responsibility his "degree" cast upon him. He fails to afford the justice and protection due to his Uncle Gloucester, when he was falsely accused by his rival peers.

My lord of Gloucester,' tis my special hope
That you will clear yourself from all suspect:
My conscience tells me you are innocent.

2 Henry VI, III, i, 139-41.

In spite of his belief, however, he allows his own royal power to be used by Gloucester's enemies for his destruction.

My lords, what to your wisdoms seemeth best,
Do or undo, as if ourself were here.

III, 1, 195-6.

Henry does not simply refuse to exercise judgment in a neutral case but refuses to mke the effort to know that the arrested man is innocent. He repeatedly behaves thus on another occasion.

In dispute with York in the parliament House, he admits the legitimacy of York's claim to make York his heir. This is morally acceptable on the ground that it saves York from the "sin" of rebellion against his anointed King. While at the same time admitting it also justifies his claims. Henry fails to exert his royal power. He tries to avoid facing his wife, but when, this is impossible or inevitable, he pleads cowardly :

Pardon me, Margaret, pardon me, sweet son;
The Earl of Warwick and the duke enforced me.

3 Hengy. VI, I, i, 228-9.

Sure of Margaret's success at the battle of Wakefield, he absents himself from the fatal molehill on which York is hurdered. He accepts passively the fruits of deeds which he should, as King, have prevented.

The failure of nobility, the queen and king to observe "degree", causes the chaotic situation fraught with peril because of the seizure of the throne by Henry Bolingbroke two generations before. However, the throne is Henry's by possession and York's by inheritance. That is, the fact of Henry IV's usurpation is implicit in the plot of the play as evident in *3 Henry VI* :

King Henry : Henry the fourth by conquest got the crown.
York : Twas by rebellion against his King.
× × × × × ×
Clifford : King Henry, be thy title right or wrong,
Lord Clifford vows to fight in thy defence :
May the ground gape and swallow me alive,
Where I shall lend to him that slew my father !

I, i, 132-62.

Though the legitimacy of his claim is stressed in a similar way, no sympathy is accorded to Edward IV at his accession. He is certainly no glamorous hero returned at last to the throne of his fathers. Beside his brother, he foreshadows the weak and decadent figure-head to become in Richard III.

The emotional tone of the play depends upon the senselessness of its tragedy and no cogent reason can be advanced for the civil war. After the battle, the son, who has killed his father mourns :

Pardon me, God, I know not what I did !

II, v, 69.

The father who has killed his son is equally ignorant of any objective behind his act, and the king himself fails to justify the cause in which the soldiers so unnaturally fight. In the face of their anguish and remorse, he can only feel:

Woe above woe ! grief more than common grief !...
Wither one rose, and let the other flourish;
If you contend, a thousand lives must wither.

II, v, 94-102.

The "deadly quarrel" is seldom for good cause. Margaret, the foreigner, the adulteress, the man-woman, must always be condemned, and whenever they are seen unkingly in action, so must Henry. In conflict with them York is the wronged victim, but when the Yorkist King is the "machiavel", Richard, it is quite natural to endorse our sympathy for the murdered Henry.

While offering Richard's crown to Richmond, what Derby at the end of *Richard III* (V, v, 4-6) calls the "long-usurped royalty", cannot be applicable to Richard's recent seizing of the crown from his nephew. It merely, also, implicitly informs his family's rebellion against Henry VI. The play-wright's indictment is not that the dynasty has been changed, but that wickedness committed has been punished and peace restored by the Tudor King. We are emotionally involved not in the righting of an ancient wrong, but in the future prospect of harmony and prosperity :

Richmond : England hath long been mad and scar'd herself;
The brother blindly shed the borther's blood,
The father rashly slaughter'd his own son.
The son, compell'd, been butcher to the sire...

0, now let Richmond and Elizabeth,
The true successors of each royal house,
By God's fair ordinance conjoin together !
And let their heirs, God, if thy will be so,
Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced peace,
With smiling plenty, and fair prosperous days !

V, v, 21-34.

The play, *Richard III*, completes the dramatic pattern begun with *1 Henry VI*. The tetralogy embodies a single situation in which, by a classical notion of peripeteia, violence breeds its own destruction and damnation.

In the tetralogy, in his treatment of English History, Shakespeare follows the orthodox concept of time. He deals mainly with the "sins" of social disorder, and in so far as he is concerned with "Justice", his play demonstrates the simple truth that he who draws sword perishes by the sword. The following dialogue of Queen Margaret exquisitely expresses the intense pity for human suffering :

I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd hlm;
I had a Harry, till a Richard kill'd him ;
Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;
Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard kill'd him...
Thy Edward he is dead, that stabb'd my Edward;
Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward,
Young York he is but boot, because both they
Match not the high perfection of my loss.

IV, iv, 40-66,

Young Clifford's lament anticipates the music of Cordelia's agonised utterance, the griefs of father and son at Towton poignantly expressed :

.....Wast thou ordain'd, dear father,
To lose thy youth in peace, and to achieve
The silver livery of advised age,
And, in thy reverence and thy chair-days, thus
To die in ruffian battle ?

2 Henry VI,V, li, 45-9.

The tender feeling is touched by the inhuman killings and deaths in war. And perhaps Shakespeare's thought found best expression in *Richard III* rather in religious than in political terms. As Richard awakes screaming : "Have mercy, Jesu ! - Soft ! I did but dream" (*Richard III*, V, ill, 178), he is more like a guilty man than a particular guilty king. His "sin" springs from man's universal desire to defy the limits ordained for him.

Shakespeare profitably deploys myth and symbols of political sort in defiance of the king, rather than its religious equivalent - the defiance of God. And, when he

handles the epic of York and Lancaster, his emphasis is no longer on general social disorder and disruption but on the individual's original sin. He expresses them in the traditional terms of usurping a throne and goes on dramatising the proliferation of such an act in the hopes, fears and agonies of every man and woman.

III

The Sinners as the Usurpers of Thrones

It is surmised that Shakespeare at the age of eleven actually witnessed the performance of the Coventry Cycle at Kenilworth in 1575.[2] And, it was, perhaps, his spectacular hearing of Lucifer's rhetoric that inspired him to write about such blind and arrogant rebellion against the divine purpose, not once but several times, in terms of illicit assumption of a throne as a symbol as evident at the end of *3 Henry VI*. The design of the regicide is more vividly revealed in Richard of Gloucester, but his murder of Henry VI is only one incident in the pattern of civil strife and does not seem as more significant to Richard himself than his other murders. Richard is among the other killers of a king.

In *Richard II*, the divine pattern is hinted to provoke our willing acceptance of its propriety, and this is done by the poetry, which describes it or alludes to it. We seldom see in existence the ordered kingdom ruled with justice and mercy in accordance with the divine scheme of God. The chorus-like figures of the gardeners, like the father and son to Henry VI, make the analogy of state and garden in a style as formal as that of disordered knot and wholesome herb gardens that belonged to Elizabethan times :

Gardener : Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth :
All must be even in our government.

Servant : Why should we in the compass of a pale
Keep law and form and due proportion,
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,
Is full of weeds...
Her knots disordered and her wholesome herbs
Swarming with caterpillars ?

III, IV 3.4-47,

Richard himself does not conform to the pattern. That is both his "sin" and his tragedy, and the divine scheme is once again thwarted and violated as it had been in the primordial garden of our first parents. The commonwealth, thus, first betrayed from within by the man, who frivolously left empty the place he had been divinely deputed to fill, was defenceless before the external attack of Bolingbroke, who stooping to fraudulent practice and foul design and force, defeated and assassinated his annointed king.

It is true that Piers Exton actually shed Richard's blood, and that Bolingbroke allowed Northumberland, the "haught insulting man" to do much bullying for him, but he is none the more acceptable for that, and this "silent king" shrewd enough to await his rival to be entrapped into the net spread for him, is obviously himself responsible for the "trenching war" and "the intestine shcok and furious close of civil butchery" which he laments at the beginning of the *1 Henry IV* (I, 111, 145-70). The forceful dissyllabic of his name occurs thrice in thirty times of Act I scene iii. And, before the scene ends, the name of the rightful heir is echoed fourteen times. We hear of noble Mortimer, revolted Mortimer, foolish Mortimer, downtrod Mortimer, until Hotspur seems to have become the very startling to 'speak nothing but "Mortimer"' to keep the king's 'anger still in motion'.

The crime focused in the first play becomes the moving force and centre of attention at the very outset of the second. The rebel-hero's ambivalence reaches its peak in the character of Henry V. This no playwright, save Christopher Marlowe, could afford to do in the 1590s. It was potent in Shakespeare's imagination, which leads to some queer and increasing ambivalence in his own attitude also, as vividly hinted in the character of Henry V.

The spectacle of rebels, however, does not emphasise the legitimacy of their cause. But, as Hotspur and his allies define their aims (*1 Henry IV.*, III, i), they do not mention the restoration of the Yorkist line but only the division of England into three estates for themselves. In this, they blunder like Richard's own when the latter leased his revenues and turned his realm Into a "tenement or pelting farm". Later, Hotspur does support their claims as representatives of the disinherited Earl of March, but vividly recapitulates Henry's treachery to Richard. Like Lady Macbeth, who, for a moment, faces the full implications of her full purpose (*Macbeth* I.v. 51-5). The Earl of Worcester warns Hotspur :

..stop all sight-holes, every loop from whence
The eye of reason may pry in upon us :
This absence of your father's draws a curtain,
That shows the ignorant a kind of fear
Before not dreamt of.

1 Henry IV, IV, 1, 71-5.

Facing the Northern lords, Prince John voices the claims of the reigning family with force and dignity :

You have ta'en up,
Under the counterfeited zeal of God,
The subjects of his substitute, my father,
And both against the peace of heaven and him.
Have here up-swarm'd them.

2 Henry IV, IV, 11, 26-30.

The substitute of this God substitute soon afterwards perpetrates the most cold-blooded treachery in Gaultree Forest. And, Shakespeare perhaps adapts his source to give the treachery to a member of the royal house itself. In fact, critics like Honor Matthews[3] are of the opinion that something seems to be compelling Shakespeare to cloud the issue and indeed the Tudor horror of rebellion is obviously at work in the play, muddying the clarity of its design. The playwright never forgets, however, the origin of these dilemmas, and this is perceptible from the fact that he never allows Henry himself to forget that the chief cause of all his misfortunes and also paradoxically of other men's "sins" of rebellion against him be a "sin" - is his own action. As he says to his son :

I know not whether God will have it so...
But thou dost in thy passages of life
Make me believe that thou art only mark'd
For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven
To punish my mistreadlngs

1 Henry .IV, III, 11, 4-11.

His mind is obsessed with the memory of the past. Again and again the past intrudes upon the present. There is no play where more brilliant vignettes of past scenes are conjured up often by Henry, and sometimes by the rebels too. He considers it for himself the excuse of necessity, but he always imagines himself and his past in terms of a guilt the Dead-Sea fruits of which he finally admits :

You, cousin Nevil, as I may remember -
When Richard, with his eye brimful of tears,
Then check'd and rated by Northumberland,
Did speak these words, now proved a prophecy !
'Northumberland, thou ladder by the which
My cousin Bolingbroke ascends my throne,
Though then, God knows. I had no such intent,
But that necessity so bow'd the state
That I and greatness were compelled to kiss;
'The time shall come[1], thus did he follow it,
'The time will come, that foul sin gathering head,
Shall break Into corruption' : so went on,
Foretelling this same time's condition,
And the division of our amity.

2 Henry IV, III, i, 65-79.

While he winces at a hint of his past by others, in his hasty interpretation of Northumberland, he sublimates his pain by an outburst of temper. The continuous references to the past extend only to the first three plays. The last of them occurs in the mouth of Henry V on the eve of Agincourt. It is the force with which the plays depict as the passage of time during which a single evil deed prolongs its influence

and proliferates in unforeseen directions. As a result, this tetralogy becomes so impressive that the full implications of theme are poignantly worked out.

The opening scene of *1 Henry IV* presents the spectacle of the loyalty of men like Blunt attaching himself sincerely to the new king, but the pattern is continually broken or flawed by the old evil. However, there is a moving scene at Shrewsbury when Douglas despatches one simulacrum after another, and discovers no true king, even when he encounters Henry himself.

Douglas : ...what art thou,
That counterfeit'st the person of a king ?
Henry : The king himself, who, Douglas, grieves at heart,
So many of his shadows thou hast met,
And not the very king, I have two boys
× × × × × ×
Douglas : I fear thou art another to counterfeit;

1 Henry IV. V, iv, 27-35.

The theme of regicide and its consequence are unfolded in the first three plays. However, the fourth play has certain ambiguity in its pattern.

However, Henry IV's dying advice to his son was to distract human thoughts from his doubtful title by foreign conquest and to follow this advice is the son's first major decision of policy after ascending the throne. It does not seem plausible to disbelieve that Shakespeare was deliberately ambiguous here. As we see *Henry V*, it appears that Henry had considered even the rewinning of the Holy Sepulchre as a means of securing his own usurped throne. He admits :

I... had a purpose now
To lead out many to the Holy Land,
Lest rest and lying still might make them look
Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,
Be it thy course to busy giddy minds
With foreign quarrels, that action, hence borne out.

2 Henry IV, IV, v, 210-16.

Such "machiavellism" cannot possibly have been intended to win approval, yet it is in principle identical with Henry V's later conduct :

Bates : ... for we know enough, if we know
We are the King's subjects. If his
Cause be wrong, our obedience to the
King wipes the crime of it out of us.
Williams : But, if the cause be not good, the
King himself hath a heavy reckoning to
Make ,when all those legs and arms and
Heads, chopp'd off in a battle, shall
Join together at the latter day and cry

All ‘we died at such a place’ - some
Swearing, some crying for a surgeon,
Some upon their wives, left poor behind
Them, I am afeared there are few
Die well that die in a battle; ...Now,
If these men do not die well, it will be
A black matter for the King that led them
To it; whom to disobey were against all
Proportion of subjection.

Henry V, IV, 1, 130-46.

Richard’s murder followed by the wars in France is really as clear an example of violence breading violence as any that Macbeth itself shows and by Henry’s agonised prayer before the battle, Agincourt is indissolubly linked to Promfret :

Not to-day, o Lord,
0, not to-day, think not upon the fault
My father made in compassing the crown !

IV, 1. 310-12.

Henry V fails as completely as do his father and son to give his people the peace which is the intended and decorous pattern of social life, and the main reason of the failure of all these three men lies in their wrongful title to the throne, which accounts for the foreign wars in the one reign as completely as it does for the civil wars in the next.

Like his father, like Claudius, like Macbeth, Henry V succeeded in establishing a temporary order on an unsound foundation, but in spite of its glamour it was as spurious as the ceremonial of Claudius’ stately court or Macbeth’s ghost-haunted banquet - a sheer mockery of the god-ordained order which had been violated. The price of Henry IV’s rebellion was paid in full not by himself or his son but by bis grandson and the people of his realm. And this must have been known to Shakespeare when he wrote of the wooing of Katharine :

Shall not thou and I, between Saint Denis and
Saint George, compound a boy, half French, half
English, that shall go to Constantinpole and
Take the Turk by the beard ? Shall we not ?
What say’st thou, my fair flower-de-luce ?

V, ii, 219-24.

Such a hope was soon to be believed. Though the motive for the treachery of Cambridge, Scroop and Grey has been, under-estimated but it is not quite insignificant because the three men, in the light of *Henry VI* alredy written by shakespeare, it is evident, that represent the cause of the murdered Richard. Perhaps the child of Henry and Katharine fulfilled his destiny, when, instead of taking the Turk by the beard at Constantinpole as his father had hoped, he died in the Tower, a vicarious sacrifice, that the “sins’’ of his grandfather might be atoned.

When Shakespeare wrote the two historical tetralogies independent of each other, he was not oblivious of Bosworth. Perhaps, he was quite aware of the shadow of the future events as he approached the end of *Henry- V*. His theme dictated - in his view -condemnation and failure for the archetypal rebel, the king-murderer. The triumph of Henry V implied not only military victory, but also a full measure of admiring affection for this ‘star of England’. Within the framework of the second tetralogy, the two purposes are mutually exclusive, that the hero-king, as the history of the land reveals, too, has ever been loved and such kings were assured of the fulfilment of the pattern of justice to their subjects.

Macbeth depicts the most striking example of the reassertion of a theme left ambiguous in the history plays. In it, the theme is again of the usurper, and since Shakespeare is quite capable of shaping his plot more freely, it is quite worthwhile to discover in what ways *Macbeth*’s structure differs from that imposed by historical fact on the earlier plays. Each modification draws the character closer to their Christian prototypes. In the first place, Shakespeare adapts his story so as to take from Macbeth all genuine grievances against the King as were prominent in the case of Bolingbroke. He takes all care to ensure that the assassinated King is wholly attractive, unlike Richard II, or Henry VI, and also gives him worthy heirs of age to rule. Though Malcolm was young, he was unlike the children of Edward IV, old enough to fight in the battle to be declared Prince of Cumberland. He allows Macbath a full measure of popularity, reputation, honour, charm and also the conjugal happiness which were denied to Richard III. Like Lucifer’s and indeed like Adam’s, his rebellion lacks any more motive than the rebel’s own self-assertion.

Richmond is simply introduced as a child blessed by Henry VI, but Malcolm is not only developed as a character. He is the eldest son of the King and the declaration that he is his father’s heir, is what directly precipitates Macbeth’s treachery. This situation is not used in the miracle plays of Luclfer’s rebellion.

In *Macbeth*, the role of Lucifer is conflated with that of Herod for when the King’s heir has escaped his designs, the tyrant seeks and finds a substitute victim. The outrage of innocence, symbolised by the murder of a child, is an important element in Shakespeare’s thought, and the killing of the young Macduff is peculiarly brutal because it is of no possible use to Macbeth. But, in committing this bloody, foul deed, he is baser even than his biblical forerunner, for he knew the life he wanted to take was safe from him, and he murdered from mere hysterical vindictiveness.

Finally, there is in *Macbeth* a new and more potent use of the “supernatural”. The history plays had, of course, touched on such material in varying degrees. In *Henry VI* witchcraft had blackened La Pucelle in the eyes of her audience, and conjuring was fully integrated into the plot when the accusations against his wife were used by Gloucester’s enemies to ensure his down-fall.

In *Richard III*, the visible dreams of the rival leaders had demonstrated the characteristically ambiguous method by which Shakespeare presents events in such

a way that they may be construed either metaphysically or naturalistically, at the spectator's (or reader's) choice. There were few places in the history plays where such a suggestion of "super-natural" influence on the human situation could be made of structural significance to the plot. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare could achieve this to screw up to an unusual pitch the tension between predestination and freewill, so conspicuously remarkable a feature of the play.

Thus, allowing his work to approximate more intimately than before to the ancient myth of Lucifer and the Lord, of course, with his artistic concern with the significance of absolute Good and Evil is embodied in characters of excelling individuality and realism, yet the play's implications are universal :

Malcolm : Comes the King forth, I pray you ?
Doctor : Ay, sir; There are a crew of wretched souls,
That stay his cure : their malady convinces.
The great array of art; but at his touch
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand -
They presently amend . ...
Macduff : What's the disease he means ?
Malcolm : 'Tis call'd the evil :

IV, III, 140-7.

The word is all-inclusive.

Julius Caesar is another instance which manifestly deals with an attack on a throne. Its story of murder and 'justice' demands some consideration at this point of our analysis. *Julius Caesar* can be viewed as a Roman version of the "sin'' of regicide or as a vindication of egalitarianism, and the theatrical production can swing to either pattern. Despite a vivid characterisation and well-conceived plot, vivid imagery, and verse's limpid clarity rarely equalled, the play is perhaps the most ambiguous of all Shakespeare's plays. However, the story moves in the clear daylight of the classical world with its dramatic personae in their pagan civilization untrammelled by either the mystic illumination or the haunting guilt of a later age.

Even in Plutarch the story is equivocal. In North's translation of the *Life of Brutus*, Shakespeare is said to have read, 'It is also reported that Brutus could evil away with the tyranny, and that Cassius hated the tyrant... for Cassius, even from his cradle, could not abide any manner of Tyrants'. Also, Ligarius hated Caesar 'for that he was brought in danger of his tyrannical power'. The word "liberty¨ has been several times used in the contexts clearly implying approval. "For myself then", said Brutus, "I mean not to hold my peace, but to withstand it, and rather die than lose my liberty".[5] Cassius, being bold, and taking hold of this word : "Why", quoth he, "what Roman is he alive that will suffer thee to die for thy liberty".

Plutarch's narrative clearly attributes the failure of the rebellion to the fact that it was contrary to the divine will. Shakespeare was deeply concerned with the problem of rebellion and its fruits. He must have found in this Roman material two

figures who must qualify for what the homilist would have called the "Luciferian" role. Caesar himself certainly aspires to a crown, though 'it was not a crown neither, it was one of those coronets'. Plutarch describes it as "a laurel crown" with "a royal band or diadem wreathed about it which in old tide was the ancient mark or token of a King".[6] Nevertheless Caesar desired it and Shakespeare must have noticed that when Caesar had refused it a third time he 'commanded the crown to be carried unto Jupiter in the Capitol[7] presumably because such a symbol properly belonged there. However, the throne Caeser desired was empty. He is an image of ambition certainly, but not of rebellion or disloyalty in any obvious sense. He is also courageous, public-spirited and never tyrannical or cruel. He is certainly no Richard of Gloucester.

His henchman, Antony, is of a similar 'mingled yarn', an opportunist if not a charlatan. He has been given the certain seal of the verse rhythms for the genuineness of his distress at Caesar's death :

0 mighty Caesar ! dost thou lie so low ?
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure ?

Ill, i, 148-50.

And, it is the same man who cynically orders :
Fetch the will hither, and we shall determine
How to cut off some charge in legacies.

IV, i. 8-9.

This the avenger, who carries dead Caesar's cause forward, and his partisans are the raffle, who leave a poet's body battered in the market-place simply because his name is Cinna, and the laconic Octavius finally destroys him.

Brutus and Cassius may like Caesar 'be motivated by ambition, but they are like him also in that they betray no owed allegiance. Despite this duality in the Conspirators, Shakespeare does seem to adapt his source to endorse the medieval indictment and condemnation of Caesar's murderers.[8] Plutarch narrates Brutus' vision thus :

Looking towards the light of the lamp that waxed
Very dim, he saw a horrible vision of a man, of a
Wonderful greatness and dreadful look, which at
The first made him marvellously afraid ... at length
He asked him what he was. The image answered him
I am thy ill-angel. Brutus and thou shall see me
By the city of Phillippes.[9]

Shakespeare modified this account and made the spirit the ghost of Julius Caesar, perhaps to suggest the Christian implications of the revenge play.

The ghost of Caesar with Ate by his side, as a figure in *The Spanish Tragedy*, might have been introduced to suggest the design of the "revenge play", itself is

symbolic of the working of the divlne justice, which, in the person of the avenger, waited until the wicked made the trap into which he blindly walked. This is exactly what Brutus does by his ill-conceived decision to fight at Philippi. The dramatic pattern here depicts Brutus and Cassius as the wrong-doers, punished by the divine forces in the universe for mortal "sin".

Cassius manifests the trait typical of the arch-rebel. His ambition has been mentioned several times, and he delights in openly defying the divine powers. He plays the role of the serpent when he tempts both Casca and Brutus to join the conspirators. He wins Casca by cunningly misinterpreting the divine purposes as shown in the "super-natural" events of the storm-(I, iii, 57-71). This is certainly a diabolical nay Satanic strategy. The treatment of Brutus is ambiguous. Cassius has "whetted" his friend against Caesar to do something he himself considers to be wrong :

therefore it is meet
That noble minds keep even with their likes;
For who so firm that cannot be seduced ?

I, ii, 314-16.

This is a temptation scene. As Iago tempts Othello, there is no possibility of misapprehension. Cassius is mighty convincing in his infectious vigour :

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we pretty men
Walk under his huge legs.

I, ii, 334-6,

Like that of Cassius, the portrait of Brutus, too, is equivocal. Both before and after the assassination suffer the sleepless-ness typical of a troubled conscience :

Our enemies have beat us to the pit.

V, v, 23.

Nevertheless, he strives to be honest to himself and others. He is an idealist, a loving husband and an adored master. Of course, Brutus' true "sin" is never wrongful self-assertion. Man's blindness is the clue which leads to the central significance of *Julius Caesar*.

IV

The Character of the Sinners

In the Shakespearean history plays, with the ambiguous figures of Henry V, Octavius, Brutus and Cassius set aside, there remains a homogeneous group with similar characteristics who all aspire to gain kingship by unlawful means and who, thus, fulfil the familiar Luciferian role. Edmund, who is the most self-conscious and therefore articulate of them all, can legitimately be referred to in interpreting the others, for although he never achieves kingship he is clearly an aspirant to its power and very nearly a successful one. As the husband of either Goneril or Regan, he

would be king of half Britain and if Albany's wife had successfully arranged her husband's 'taking off' Edmund would have been in a fair way to securing the absolute power he craved. As Edmund declares :

Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound.

King Lear, I, ii, 1-2.

His conduct shows that in reality he is bound to nothing apart from his own desires, and that the only law he serves is his "own appetites'', with which he identifies Nature. To Edmund, the bonds of blood are no more sacred than the bonds of allegiance. To him, "a credulous father.. and a brother noble" are simply fair game, and what he proclaims, 'will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood" is to him no more than counters, false coin, which will serve to defraud a man as unscrupulous as himself.

Richard III vaunts a like independence and dispatches brother and nephew with equal gusto. Richard's character, drawn from the traditional Tudor orthodoxy concerning this Yorkist "usurper", is developed consistently throughout the second and third part of *Henry VI* and the play of which he is the eponymous hero, it is quite fascinating to realise how early Shakespeare had made up his mind as to the precise character of the destructive forces, which later are imparted their supreme expression in Iago and evoke Othello's terrible cry :

But yet the pity of it, Iago : O Iago, the pity of it, Iago :

Othello, IV, i, 206-7.

Richard's very first line written to indicate his intent to overstep his elder brother's is completely 'in character':

Margaret : He (York) is arrested, but will not obey;
His sons, he says, shall give their words for him.
York : Will you not, sons ?
Edward : Ay, noble father, if our words will serve.
Richard : And if words will not, then our weapons shall.

2 Henry VI, V, i, 136-40.

Richard's language sometimes expresses a gratuitous callousness: More important is his refusal to accept the metaphysical sanctions recognised by his own community. To him a blow is stronger than a plighted word, the wisdom of the seer folly and the teaching of the Church beneath contempt :

Sprawl'st thou ? Take that to end thy agony;

3 Heary VI, V, v, 39.

A bitter irony in his wooing of Anne is evident, as she weeps beside the bier of his eldest victim, which remains unnoticed, when Richard III is acted in isolation. As Richard says :

That hand, which for thy love, did kill thy love,
Shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love;

Richard III, I, ii, 190-1.

He has already expressed the value of the love he offers :

And this word 'Love', which grey beards call divine,
Be resident in men like one-another
And not in me.

3 Henry VI, V, vi, 81-3.

He is fully conscious of the pattern he breaks. As he takes into his arms his baby nephew he is soon to murder, he protests:

And, that I love the tree from whence thou sprangst
Witness the loving kiss I give the fruit.
(Aside) To say the truth, so Judas kiss'd his master,
And cried 'all hail', when as he meant all harm.

V, vii, 31-4.

Perhaps he realises ultimately the futility of life that the divine sanction forces on the human life. The central tenet of his creed is evident :

I have no brother, I am like no brother ...
... I am myself alone.

V, vi, 80-3.

Macbeth is a more tragic figure than either Edmund or Richard because he realises more fully the sacredness of the bonds he is nevertheless determined to break.

.. He's here in double trust;
First, as 1 am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed.

Macbeth. I, viii, 12-14.

The price paid for the breaking of the ties which unites a man to an ordered society is,very naturally, loneliness. Rilchard, who once accepted this with such confident pride, feels the inkling of actual horror before he dies :

I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;
And if I die, no soul shall pity me.

Richard III, V, ill, 200-1.

Edmund faces the same horror by clinging to the self-confidence that comes from the satisfaction of his lust. He mutters : "Yet Edmund was beloved". But Macbeth realised too late that he had unwillingly sacrificed love - the known and valued love between him and the wife, who, through his own action, died alone and left him alone at last.

She should have died hereafter :
There would have been a time for such a word.

Macbeth, V, v,17-l8.

Earlier, he felt panicky about his
... way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have.

V, iii, 22-6.

Henry IV suffers a smaller measure of this same loneliness in his estrangement from his eldest son, and like the other two, pays the penalty of sleeplessness, though not of bad dreams. His wife's words best describe Richard's nights :

For never yet one hour in his bed
Have I enjoy'd the golden dew of sleep,
But have been waked by his timorous dreams.

Richard III, IV, i, 83-5.

He himself admits the reason; "O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me !" (V, iii, 179).

Henry makes no such confession. Both Richard and Macbeth are finally lost because their isolation makes them realise the "sin" of despair. As Richard says :

...I am in
So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin;

IV, ii, 64-5.

And later :
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all, Guilty ! guilty:
I shall despair.

V, iii, 198-200.

Likewise Macbeth's words also re-echo his :
I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedius as go o'er.

Macbeth, III, iv,136-8.

And, to him life becomes
... a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

V, v, 26-8.

Henry IV tries to indulge himself to console by a kind of fatalism :

Are these things then necessities ?
Then let us meet them like necessities.

2 Henry IV. Ill, i, 92-3.

In this despair, repentance becomes impossible. Richard and Macbeth do not even attempt it, but Henry does. And, the most revealing comparison in this case is one with Claudius. Claudius prays, like Henry, for forgiveness, and like him, he would make some restitution, if he could. As Henry would prefer to pardon the rebels, so Claudius would like to win Hamlet's friendship - provided that the price were not too high. But both men allow their hands to be forced. Claudius, like Henry's tacit acceptance of prince John's unscrupulousness at Goultrea forest, supports Laertes' treachery. Henry IV prays :

How I came by the crown, O God forgive;

2 Henry IV, IV, v, 219.

It was exactly the same petition that Claudius was making for his personal salvation. However, he eschews a false front of religion, and is self-critical enough to recognise the inefficacy of his repentance, which Henry never does :

....Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn ? 'Forgive me my foul murder' ?
That cannot be; ...
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence ?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may strove by justice;
...but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature.

Hamlet, III, iii, 50-63.

Mercy, at the cost of not 'retaining the offence' is offered both Claudius and Macbeth 'between the stirrup and the ground', but neither grasps it. Also, there is no sign in the dialogue that either of them is capable to see the opportunity. Nevertheless, the plot obviously defines it as offered, approached and then, refused :

King : Gertrude, do not drink.
Queen : I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
King : (Aside) : It is the poison'd cup : it is too late.

Hamlet (V, ii, 300-3)

It was not too late. Claudius could have dashed the cup from her hand, as a few minutes later, the dying Hamlet dashes it from Horatio's. But such an act meant exposure and certain death. It would have saved him as well as Gertrude, whom he

loved, and, who in her fashion, loved him, but Claudius loved himself and his usurped crown more than his wife. The moment of his choice is like the one in which Portia makes her offer to Shylock of his last chance and is refused :

Portia : Be merciful,
Take thrice thy money, bid me tear the bond.
Shylock : When it is paid according to the tenour.

Merchant of Venice, IV, i, 233-5.

Macbeth likewise is given this final chance, but he no longer cares to keep the 'top of sovereignity'. There is another barrier to his repentance which is the hardest of all for 'fallen' man to overleap. The Luciferlan pride remains dominant in him even in defeat :

Macduff : Turn, hell-hound, turn :
Macbeth : Of all men else I have avoided thee :
but get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.
I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.

V, viii, 3-29.

In each case the price is too high to be payable. And, life offers the opportunity to pay it. However, Henry V is the last man to make sacrifice that could bring his conscience peace :

More will I do;
Though all that I can do is nothing worth.
Since that my penitence cooes after all,
Imploring pardon.

IV, i, 319-22.

As firmly as Claudius did, Henry 'retains the offence'. The Christian tradition of the rebel angel and the 'glazing' serpent, who by his cunning was successful in seducing Eve, has in these plays, been conflated with the contemporory Renaissance, 'machiavel'. Henry IV has been identified with this dual figure. This identity reinforces the interpretation of the whole of the second tetralogy, concerned with regicide and usurpation. Thus, this also reveals that prime anomaly among Shakespearean heroes is Henry V.

V

The Sinner As Ambiguous Character

Henry V and Octavius Caesar are the two ambiguous characters who share the sin of being cruel and machiavelian. Henry's crown is stained with blood (of *HenryV*, IV, i, 300-19). In him, Shakespeare visualised a valiant, modest and successful hero in war as in love. The country was living through a prolonged period of crisis. Men

were fighting and dying in France. Henry V accepted his crown from his usurping father with his eyes open.

To Shakespeare, perhaps Henry's place in the historical sequence was that of successor to the man who killed a king and who had repeatedly been presented as the direct and visible symbol of God himself :

Yet I will remember
The favours of these men : were they not mine ?
Did they not sometime cry, 'all hail' to me ?
So Judas did to Christ;

Richard II, IV, i, 167-70,

Many such references are there in Richard's own mouth. As Henry IV realises (*2 Henry IV*, IV, v, 184-225) his claim which exists in the realm of 'Realpolitik' and nowhere else, Hal knows what his inheritance is and accepts it in that knowledge. The non- sequitur of 'Then plain and right must my possession be', serves only to emphasise the original jib from Richard.

Hal claims the crown by discent but knows that he must be prepared to defend it by force :

Lo, here it sits,
Which God shall guard; and put the world's whole strength
Into one giant arm, it shall not force
This lineal honour from me; this from thee
Will I to mine leave as 'tis left to me.

2 Henry IV, IV, v, 43-7.

As 'it is left to me' : this means doubtfully and only to be held by force ruthlessly applied. Henry's son proved an unsuitable recepient of such a sinister legacy. Henry occupies the throne not by inheritance only but by conscious choice, too, the throne of a murdered king. He repents, but through Claudius as Shakespeare shows the petty value of such self-repentance and through Macbeth the emptiness of a stolen crown.

Henry V has many virtues which are of value in the body politic, but he 'retains the offence', and though during his reign stability is achieved, rebellion crushed in embryo and the nation united in a foreign war, yet the recovery is temporary, and the payment of the price of blood is only postponed. Apparently, a very different man from his father, Hal shares with him one dominant characteristic : He deliberately chooses to emancipate himself from the bends to which humanity should yield. Hal admits both in letters and spirit his bond to God, but like the other 'machiavels', he cultivates a deliberate 'non-attachment' to humanity ;

I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness :
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,

Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at.

1 Henry IV, I, ii, 219 - 25

This is the declamation of a man who takes from others exactly what he wants - crown, or championship, love, or amusement, the kingdom of England or the kingdom of France. He dismisses Falstaff, forgets Poins, executes Bardolph, sends Cambridge, Scroop and Grey to death, all with equal ease :

What shall I say to thee, Lord Scroop ?
... Thou that didst bear the key of all my counsels,
That knewst the very bottom of my soul,
× × ×
May it be possible, that foreign hire
Could out of thee extract one spark of evil
That might annoy my finger ?

Henry V, II, 11, 94-102,

Nevertheless, Henry was not a man with the right to condemn anyone for practising on another for his use. Also, despite his gaiety and ease of manner it was not an obstacle to identify him one with the "machiavels". And, in his portrait of Henry, Shakespeare was never completely detached from a myth of "man's ingratitude". The speech reveals a fleeting glimpse not of Henry's mind but of his creator's.

In Henry V, Shakespeare presents a man whose deliberately adopted machiavellian 'non-attachment' may fall him in a crisis, so that he becomes involved with humanity against his will, and momentarily loses his defences. Perhaps, Shakespeare felt that only by exceptional charm could such men hope to blind their fellows to their essentially predatory purposes. Even Falconbridge, from his ebullient first entry to his temporary adoption of a machiavellian allegiance to 'commodity' has not a more delightful buoyancy than Edmund. Richard III's animal spirits under the stimulus of risk are infectious. Despite Hal's character as a son well- developed in the story of Agincourt, as indicated in *2 Henry IV*, (II, ii, 37-55), where his relationship with his father is given exceptional overtones, he is genuinely stirred by bis own accession to the crown :

God witness with me, when I here came in,
And found no course of breath within your majesty,
How cold it struck my heart !

2 Henry IV, IV, v, 150-2.

With the peculiar intensity the crowding emotions sway a young monarch mounting his father's throne, we are reminded of the modest words of Malcolm after the death of Macbeth, which reveal the former's quivering sensibility before

his sucession to the crown. Shakespeare allows the words to touch the usually cold heart of Henry Plantagenet, giving him an unwonted gentleness :

This new and gorgeous garment, majesty,
Sits not so easy on me as you think.
Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear;
This is the English, not the Turkish court.
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry, Harry...
I'll be your father and your brother too;
Let me but bear your love, I'll bear your cares.

2 Henry IV, V, ii 44-68.

Such tenderness stirs in on the night before Agincourt. In spite of the mordant jesting with Williams and Bates, he is suddenly touched by the plight of the tiny army surrounded in the darkness by its enemies, by the pathos of his lonely, help-less soldiers, by his vision that the victory he hopes to win is not for himself alone, but for them all, by his unexpected realisation of his commitments and concerns for everyone there :

The day, my friends and all things stay for me.

Henry V, IV, 1, 325.

The line conveys an humble, vibrant acceptance of the role of leadership. The same sudden involvement partially redeems the wooing of Katharine from the coarse, political bluster, which it is sometimes said to be. There is a real feeling as he takes her into his arms with the words : "Therefore, patiently yielding. (Kissing her) YOU have witchcraft in your lips, Kate" (V, 11, 274). But a few minutes later, he has altogether escaped from his emotion, and is seen driving his hard bargain and making his bawdy jokes with Burgundy and the King.

If Henry is indeed the individualist, the unscrupulous "getter," his allegiance to "commodity" could nevertheless occasionally be pierced by an attack on his heart. In the earlier scenes with Failstaff, Shakespeare intended to show us Hal responding to Falstaff's wit and light-hearted iconoclasm -as their very similar philosophies of life dictated - simply self- sufficient and self-seeking. But Henry, free of the two worlds for a while, soon made his choice and had re-established his independence of his friend long before he publicly rejected him. Falstaff's own attitude is a genuine and brilliant example of ambivalence. He bears no malice for the snub. His conscious philosophy of life is as machiavellian as Hal's own, and his marauding expeditions to Gloucestershire show him as ruthless as ever his prince could be :

If the young dace be a bait for the old
pike, I see no reason in the law of nature
but I may snap at him.

2 Henry IV, III, ii, 355-7

The lines of Sonnet No. 95 (11.5-8) suggest such ambivalent attitude to the royal hero. The critic like Traversi[10] interprets Henry as a man deeply divided within himself by a consideration of the abnormally violent and unpleasant emotionalism of some of the young prince's speech on war. The only man who rivals Henry in the violence of his language about the ravages of war is Timon, who in the desparation of his misanthropy urges Alcibiades to ravish Athena in words hardly stronger than Henry's own :

Timon : If Alcibiades kill my countrymen,
Let Alcibiades know this of Tlmon,
That Timon cares not. Bat if he sack fair Athens,
And take our goodly aged man by the beards,
Giving our holy virgins to the stain
Of contumelodious, beastly, mad-brain'd war,
Then let him know, and tell him Timon speaks it,
In pity of our aged and our youth.
I cannot choose but tell him, that I care not.

Timon of Athens, V, i, 172-80.

The parallel is sufficiently startling to suggest that Shakespeare thought of his hero-king that could not be openly proclaimed in the play of victories, but which could be insinuated so as to make the judicious grieve. According to Prof. Traversi, Henry's habit of endeavouring to shift the responsibility of his own act of violence on to others, as he does at Harfleur and also before declaring war on France, is another realistic touch in the portrait of a neurotic, who has deliberately suppressed his more honest and generous qualities, but has by no means inhibited them entirely.

Besides Henry V, we have the figure of another successful politician, Octavius Caesar. His place in history was, like Henry's, a peculiarly honourable one, to the Elizabethan imagination. Not only was his name associated with the greatest era of Latin literature, but he had made the world [to] usher into the age of peace in which the Christ was born. The following lines are very much definitive to suggest his power as Shakespeare actually intended :

But let determined things to destiny
Hold unbewail'd their way.

Antony and Cleopatra, III, vi, 88-4.

Also, the issue of the struggle with Antony is admittedly one on which the fortune of the world depends :

The time of universal peace is near :
Prove this a prosperous day, the three nook'd world
Shall bear the olive freely.

IV, vi, 4-6.

But as a person, Octavius is even more inadequate to his historical role than was Henry Plantagenet. He shares the English King's basic "machiavellian" heresy that personal righteousness is irrelevant to the affairs of state, and he succeeds in

identifying himself so completely with Rome that he believes Antony has to be condemned mainly because in all his "lascivious wassails" he "hardly ... vouchsafed" to think he had partners.

Although he admits his obligations to Lepidus with the significant words, personal loyalty means nothing to him :

I know it for my bond;

I, iv, 84.

He liquidates the 'slight unmeritable man' as soon as he safely can. He genuinely expects Cleoptra to be willing to buy safety by betraying Antony :

The Queen
Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she
From Egypt drivers her all - disgraced friend,
Or take hs life there.

III, xii, 20-3.

He himself gives his sister whom he apparently loves sincerely to a man whom he both despises and mistrusts, in order to win a political advantage. To Cleopatra's messenger he says :

Bid her have good heart,
She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,
How honourable and how kindly we
Determine for her; for Caesar cannot live
To be ungentle.

V, i, 56-60.

Also, to his own envoy, he speaks :

Go and say,
We purpose her no shame : give her what comforts
The quality of her passion shall require,
Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke
She do defeat us; for her life in Rome
Would be eternal in our triumph.

V, i, 61-6.

And, this is the man whom Cleopatra finally defeats.

With her love certainly very differently from Juliet's or Cordelia's, Cleopatra drew Mark Antony into a perilous country in which he destroyed himself as well as her, but the world from which he was lured-by his, "serpent of old Nile", was neither innocent nor gracious. It was the world of hard bargain and the proscription list, the loveless world of the "machiavel'' from which it was surely good for him to escape, though lie was adjudged by his peers to have failed so calamitously in that Egypt where he became "passion's slave'', "apipe for Fortune's finger to sound what stop she please".

It is perhaps very likely that Shakespeare might have thought that the "sin" of machiaveilism was a necessity for any successful ruler. Volumnia urges it upon her son, Coriolanus with immense persuasiveness.

You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse,
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honour as in war;

Coriolanus, III, ii, 48-49.

This advice must have sounded well on the lips of Henry V or Octavius Caesar. Coriolanus fails to put it into practice. He causes great suffering and he dies miserably. As a ruler, he was a complete failure.

Thus, it aeems that the pattern to which the reader's attention is invited as laid down in the teachings of the Christian Church formed the raw material of a powerful drama on the medieval stage. Miracle and morality plays were acted until the last decade of the sixteenth century, and Elizabethan audience were interested in the principal ideas and values of a united view of life which the contemporary drama depicted. Basic elements in their outlook were their conception of man's place in a divinely created universe and of his ability to know and choose between good and evil. Hence came the belief in the reality of sin bringing with it the fear of God's justice, the desire of his mercy and the realisation of a clash between them.

The first (or primary) sin, committed by Lucifer, was conceived as ambition - the desire to be as God, and. this sin was reflected iu all man's lesser attempt to transcend the limits imposed on them by their creator. The only excuses liable to be pleaded in mitigation of man's admitted failure were the temptation by the forces of evil outside himself and the human frailty which made him a ready prey to deception. The man was liable to be condemned unless he received the help of a saviour.

Upto the writing of *Measure for Measure*, there is observable a passionate interest in what an Elizabethan homilist called the "Luciferian sin" and an almost obsessional concern with the irreconciliability of justice and mercy. No longer do the Christian symbolism and prototypes stand imperceptibly. Of course, they never disappear. What does disappear fully is the finality of Doomsday and the cataclysm of damnation

Notes and References

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3. Ibid., pp. 29-30.
4. Ibid., p.34.
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6. *Life of Antony*.
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Post-Empire Events and Relocating African Protest Literature: The Analysis of Heroic Genres in a Historical and Political Context

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In their attempts to classify mankind in different types, the early Greek philosophers gave a special place to the men and women who lived for action of bravery and gained a wider distinction from that remarkable performance. They believed that heroism is an important element in the human soul. Similar notions are shared by many nations of our time because the life of heroic action is always superior within the context of the pursuit of human dignity. We do not reward people because of their being warriors, but because of the just cause they stand for. This is what we call the gratification of the senses. A particular heroic event leaves everlasting memories and every generation looks back to epic poetry with delight and admiration. Homer made it clear that heroic achievement was of a superior value in his time. The critical philosopher, Heraclitus, sees the heroic age as impressive and a pursuit of great reputation. Aristotle viewed honour not merely as a reward given for the noblest deeds, but as one of the greatest human virtues, as well.

The heroic narrative is regarded by many societies as something of immortal glory among mortals. A literary epic is inspired by the belief that the immortal heroic action and the honour the heroes and heroines bring to their fellow men are caused by a real superiority in natural endowments. He who died for the dignity of his people is sometimes more admirable than he who is alive. Bowra (1952: 4) argues that "heroes are honoured because they have made a final effort in courage and endurance, and no more can be asked of them." The heroic poetry is essentially a historical narrative and has always been remarkable for its national character. It usually creates its own world of imagination in which men and women of principles celebrate the greatest historic mission that has been achieved. There is nothing greater in human history than the dignity achieved through risking life; and such a story must be told and retold so that it can appeal to us in its own right. The heroic epic cannot exist unless we believe that human beings are in themselves sufficient objects of interest and that their main claim is the pursuit of honour through heroism and risk. In a country where the notion of patriotic pride is either suppressed or not to be found as part of cultural prestige, Protest narrative can hardly flourish and/or make sense to the succeeding generations.

In the context of the demand for the independent existence of societies, the heroic epic is associated with the rallying cry of the patriotic generations and has marked the growth of national pride. The themes of heroism and human freedom are closely related : "A hero is a man of distinguished courage or ability; admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities" (*Websters' Encyclopedic Dictionary*, 1996: 665). The protagonist hero figure in war times is a person worthy of veneration, regarded as a model or ideal, and his life exhibits valour and fortitude. The heroic epic has a long history in human societies and it goes parallel with the survival of mankind. For instance, the period of popular heroic epic in Europe goes back to 'Trojan War' of 1250 B.C, the time when a conflict between Greece and Troy is made famous by Homer's *Iliad*. Paris, son of Priam of Troy, carried off Helen the wife of Menelaus of Sparta, and took her to Troy. The Greeks led by Agamemnon, Menelaus, Odysseus, Achilles and other heroes, swore to take revenge and besieged Troy. In apparent defeat, they pretended to sail away, leaving a huge "Wooden Horse" ('Trojan-Horse') outside the city, with Greek soldiers concealed inside (in its belly). The Trojans took it into the city, and that night the soldiers opened the city gates to the Greek army. Most of the Trojans were killed, the city burnt, and the kidnapped Helen reclaimed. The centrality of this narrative is that heroism plays a crucial role in the making of human history. This heroic achievement has continued to be one of the popular masterpiece narratives in European traditional literature. There are many dramatic heroic performances of this kind throughout the globe. Both the traditional and the modern societies continue to celebrate the remarkable achievements of their heroes because of their instructive appeal and historical significance. Most of the colourful events in human history have been built by the immense contributions of the brave men and women of our world and their valuable works must remain with us throughout generations. *Geerarsi sagalee saba jannaati, jannummaan hundee jireenya biyyaati.* Literally, 'the *geerarsa* is the voice of a hero society, and heroism is the basis for national existence.' Like the *Iliad* of Homer, the *geerarsa* is highly valued and remains a compelling subject in the history of the Oromo because of its educative role.

"In its standard sense, the term epic or heroic poem is applied to a work that meets at least the following criteria: it is a long narrative poem on a serious subject, told in a formal and elevated style, and centred on a heroic…figure on whose tribe, a nation or in the instance of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the human race" (Abrams, 1993: 53). The epic poetry is thus a long poem, especially a poetic composition about the actions of great men and women in human history. In epic literature, a series of great achievements or events is narrated continuously at length in elevated language. Abrams's research shows that the traditional epics were written versions of what had originally been oral poems about a tribal or national hero that emerged in the heroic age (warlike age). For instance, in European literary history, among these traditional heroic epics are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that the Greeks ascribed to Homer, the

Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf*, and the 12thcentury French epic, the *Chanson de Roland*. The oral epic is a war time narrative which reflects the trying circumstance of a particular period and how those who are tested by that circumstance proudly describe the violent chain of events in a dramatic form.

The heroic poets as critical observers of every passing episode make us aware of the major critical issues of war times and the pressures to which poets as critics have to respond. In the analysis of the *Geerarsa,* we have to begin with the broad idea of heroic literature by raising some of the intriguing questions to be answered during the crucial moments in human history. Oral literary epic aims at moving its readers or listeners to wonder and emotion. It is a subject dedicated to nobler actions, narrated in the loftiest style, with an intention of moving the mind toward the concreteness of the events. In order to grasp the reality of our time, we need to learn through examples, one that can incite us to good works by showing the reward of excellence. In reading and writing the *Geerarsa*, as we do in other heroic narratives, we have to set before ourselves an excellent purpose; and that purpose is to help the next generations by showing them the exemplary human deeds. Every action is performed with some reflection and choice, and the epic literature calls for moral courage and thought, which the Oromo call *abbaan falmatu (iyyatu) malee ollaan namaaf hin birmatu*; meaning a neighbour will not be on your side unless you fight for your dignity.

Several forces converged to create the outpouring of Oromo poetry, especially the *Geerarsa* genre, which plays a significant role in the cultural tradition of the society. The political and social upheaval brought about by activists and non-violent movements for *Civil Rights*, like *Macha- Tuulama*, ushered in dramatic development in protest literature. The term *Geerarsa*, which probably is equivalent to 'defiant metaphor,' refers to telling or narrating heroic story. In Oromo history, the *Geerarsa* narrative is one of the defiant responses to eviction and a call for resistance against master-tenant relations created by the *Gabbaar* (serfdom) system of 1880s-1970s; the time when the absence of alternatives was compounded by offering only tragic possibilities for the subaltern group. In the traditional setting of the Oromo, the *Geerarsa* poetry is associated with the image of social prestige; and its producer, who is seen as a custodian of national heritage, enjoys the greatest reputation and high social status.

As in the rest of Africa, anti-feudal domination and anti-colonial influence in East Africa has tended to fall within two categories: the resistance movements based on cultural nationalism on the one hand, violent rebellion against colonial rule and the native autocrats on the other. For instance, the 1880s-1970s Rebellion against the *gabbaar* system in Ethiopian empire, the 1900s Maji Maji uprising in Tanzania and the 1950s Mau Mau Rebellion in Kenya are remembered not merely as forces against marginalization, but also is followed by the flourishing of Protest literatures, both oral and written. The development of the *Geerarsa*, as we shall see later in the subsequent parts, is therefore, closely connected with the growth of the renaissance and *Black Consciousness movements* of the 1800s-1980s in the African continent. The revival of indigenous literature or what is known as black arts or aesthetics of the 1960s-1980s

in East Africa reinforced dramatic performances, particularly heroic epics. From the beginning of the oral form of literature to the present, the *Geerarsa* narrative continued to be powerful as it increasingly addressed the issue of humanity and the restoration of dignity. As a form of artistic expression, it has the potential to play the important role in Oromo resistance history, especially in a political landscape where civil liberties and many other forms of expressions are proscribed or curtailed.

The need to challenge the conditions confronting the Oromo has strongly influenced the *Geerarsa* during the catastrophic events of 1886, 1887 and 1960. It may be argued that by its very existence as a literary form, Oromo heroic literature, which is a response to repressive demands and the denial of post-conquest civil rights, historically represents a rejection of the violent system of ruling. Several themes have dominated the *Geerarsa* poetry from its beginnings. Often drawing on the dominant values and ideals, the epic poets have focused on the issue of survival. They aimed at criticizing the absurdity of the nationalist leaders and have taken ironic stance toward aggressiveness and the absence of forbearance, contrasting political rhetoric of totalitarian regimes with the realities of indirect slavery or serfdom. Having roots in African tradition, satirical allusions had been the key elements in the Oromo Protest literature through much of its long history.

The "Eviction Periods" (1872-1974) in the feudal empire, which created the condition for the growing of cultural activists and rebellion movements against land expropriation of the *gabbaar* period, which will be discussed in detail later under Macha-Tuulama and Arsii protest narratives, the *Geerarsa* remained popular instruments of resistance until the late 1960s. It achieved new levels of importance because of its quality of energizing people's solidarity. The late 1890s in Oromo history also saw the development of substantial body of heroic epic in which the poets contrasted the devastating effects of transferring richest farmlands to the warlords and feudal gentry with the freedom and prosperous life of the pre-conquest. In terms of human predicament, the emergence of Oromo epic poetry may be compared with the new vision embodied in *Harlem Renaissance* of Langston Hughes (1921) and many others, when great self-awareness, high cultural ambitions and literary movements brought about the new role of Protest literature in the African American community. The Oromo epic narrators set in motion a poetic tradition characterized by furious pursuit of freedom from the repressive feudal system in all its dimensions, as well as the cultivation of heroic visions authenticated by its own distinctive literary forms and perpetual communal values. In short, the idea of human dignity marks Oromo oral literary consciousness from the early period of serfdom (1872) to *the Mutilation of Hands and Breasts* (1886), *Massacre at Calanqoo* (1887) and popular uprising of the 1960s and 1970s. During these periods of turbulence, the epic poets were popular critics of social values as they envisioned a world of justice. Furthermore, as we shall see later in the documented poems, the *Geerarsa* of these particular historic moments reflected a widespread disenchantment with the values of the class in power and continued to embrace the egalitarian notions of discouraging wars and violence. In the

context of the socio-political and economic imbalance of the 19th century, the epic poets rallied the society in the cause of freedom; and dating back to the early 1870s to the present, their oral materials reflect Oromo concerns in a larger cultural and national identity. As I have mentioned earlier, the verbal artists tend to employ the heroic epic as verbal weapon against the status-quo and created a body of Protest narrative that grew out of Civil Rights movements and folk roots. The cultural and political movements of the 1960s and 1970s not only changed the way Oromo thought about their socio-political legitimization but also planted the seeds for new trends in the exploration of literary possibilities and aesthetic tradition.

One of the major common characteristics of the *Geerarsa* has been its response to specific historical events, as for instance, the years between the 1870s and 1890s: series of wars to impose feudal system, great famine (*rukkisa*), conquest, annexation, *Harkaa fi Harma Muraa Aanolee* (the Mutilation of Hands and Breasts at Aanolee), *Calii Calanqoo* (Massacre at Calanqoo) and land confiscation; the 1900s and 1970s: the partition of rich Oromo land among wealthy landlords (warlords), the imposition of serfdom (*gabbaar*), famine, and the eviction of rural population under the empire; the 1970s and 1990s: communism, the destructive settlement programme (*safaraa/ yemandar misrataa*), wars, famine, unrest and the scenes of carnage. Most significant was the Arsii freedom movement of the 1880s-1890s led by Leenjisoo Diigaa (see Abbas 1990), Rayya-Azabo revolt of 1928-1930 in Wollo, which involved Ras Gugsa Walee, the Wallagga independent movement of 1936, the 1960s-1970s Arsii-Bale and Macha-Tuulama patriotic movements, led by General Waaqoo Guutuu and General Taddese Birru respectively, the rebellion resistance in the east- Hararge (1970s-1990s) led by Jaarraa Abbaa Gadaa, reinforced protest literature in Oromiyaa. Altogether, waves of protests and uprisings of several decades for land reform and change in Oromiyaa contributed immensely to an atmosphere of creating new emerging forces of writers and scholars who insisted on the fundamental notions related to democracy: cultural identity, literary revival, equality of religion and socio-economic empowerment. The Protest narratives of these periods in Oromiyaa were mainly about the complex issues related to the burdened generations of the serfdom era- the evil aspects of wars, ruthless exploitation, man-made economic difficulties, the devastating effects of feudal empire and the necessity of changing the inequitable socio-economic structure.

The main features of the *Geerarsa* genres are patriotism and successful military careers which include celebration of the whole scenes or episodes, both the bright day of victory and the tragic laments drawn from different trying circumstances and horrendous war experiences. When battles are lost and won, the world is for the next patriots, and the young generation must take responsibilities to transmit the worthwhile achievements of the past heroes. The *Geerarsa* can be read or understood as a territorial history of post-conquest Oromiyaa in which it is set and as forward-looking reassurance. The issue of human right, the making of history, the tragedy of totalitarian powers and conquest, the carnage, and the questions of conflict resolution are at the heart of this epic poetry. In thematic terms, the Oromo protest narrative reminds us of the sordid

past, takes us to the present, calling for a proper human relations and the hope of the future.

The construction of a distant past, whether global or national, depends upon a method that relies on historical references to capture a vivid account of human achievements over centuries, which are handed down from generations to generations in the form of oral literature. In reading past events, we read the minds of people who lived centuries ago, and this kind of reading becomes productive if the oral material is perceived as part of a historical process. In a historical perspective, the *geerarsa* can be seen within the context of the background for the emergence of postcolonial literature in Africa, how it was perceived in the imperial political setting, the way it depicts the events and attitudes of its period, and the relevance of those events to the new order of our times. The traditional Oromo artists need appreciation for their ability of pressing a sense of the real and concrete presences. By means of his dynamic sense of creativity, they endeavour in all forms of combinations to make events or scenes more meaningful and lively. In their rhetorical techniques, the oral narrators often use an elevated and lofty style so as to exert a strong influence; and listening to the *Geerarsa* heroic performance leads the audience to a moving emotion and deep feelings. These feelings uplift the spirit of the listeners, filling them with unexpected astonishment and pride, arousing profound and noble thoughts and suggesting the prominence of self-empowerment.

In traditional societies where the vehicle for communication is mainly verbal, the central events of human life are invested with elaborated ceremonies by which the social organism empowers itself so as to make a meaningful journey that leads to success. In African tradition, the heroes are usually portrayed in superhuman terms. The heroic poets teach us that the days of brave men and women will never get old; and therefore, celebrating heroic events with extraordinary personalities is one way of giving their tales a unique appeal as well as ensuring that the great deeds of the past remain alive in the memories of the succeeding generations. The illustrious heroes Martin Luther King Jr, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Waaqoo Guutu, Taddese Birru, to mention only a few, have become national symbols, consecrated with monuments and hagiographic literature. In the history of mankind, the heroes function in the national culture as standard-bearers of the values and goals of their nations. The Oromo heroic literature depicts actions that the oral poet recognizes as necessary and true. In this respect, the language of the patriotic narrator is almost similar to the language of the founding philosophers in that it infers universal facts from the observation of events and the relations of characters in a particular critical moment in the history of the nation. The *Geerarsa* narrative as the reflection of cultural tradition of the heroic age of the *Gadaa* aims at reinforcing self-assurance and social stability. It goes parallel with national history in celebrating a stunning victory of culture heroes of the country. This part discusses how oral tradition serves as a record of history and a timeless evidence of historic events to which the technique of New Criticism is to be applied.

"The man must in this case be praised through his ancestors. Their greatness must be established, and he must be shown to be their worthy descendant" (Adams, 1992: 510). Almost every man has a natural desire to empower himself, engross as much prestige and reputation as possible so as to build a popular image that would enable him/her to win the social and political fame. The successful and influential individual moves the nation and gains widespread popular supports, the triumphant fighter is not only decorated for his/her valour, but is likely to win political power as well. That is why the oral poet often tries to find the appropriate audience that can disseminate the fame of his achievements and the extent of his possessions. Most heroic tales look back to what is known as the *heroic age* when the patriotic heroes emerged to withstand the hostile environments and the domination of nations by the rising despots. Throughout the globe, the heroic age varies in different indigenous literatures. For instance, Homer's epics of the 8th century, was about the war with Troy. The heroic poetry of German, Scandinavian and English peoples mainly deals with the great German migrations of the 4th-6th century A.D. The Oromo heroic epic deals with hunting and imperial conquest; and this ranges from the ancient pastoral and hunting period to the late 20th century; the latter marked by marginalization and resistance. In the heroic-age society, the main function of the epic poem in Africa appears to be to stir the spirit of hero nationals to actions, lauding their exploits and those of their illustrious ancestors by assuring a long and glorious recollection of their fame.

> Like most technologically underdeveloped countries, African cultures are based on values that are fundamentally societal; the main functions of folk-literature are…to perpetuate the memory of its past…and so to bolster its sense of collective identity and dignity, to record the wisdom pragmatically accumulated by generations of ancestors in proverbs and gnomic tales and to celebrate the prowess of…warriors whose deeds have ensured…the glory of the group (Gérard, 1990: 124).

In its peculiar form, the *Geerarsa* poetry is a subject worthy of serious study. It is one of the popular literary genres which depicts manifold problems of the war times and the virtues of courage and strength to overcome those difficulties. The elevated metaphorical languages are used to give the hero great respect and verbal reward and this is usually accompanied by dozens of related references.

The heroic performances are often presented at a large gathering of people, and such recitation has tremendous effect on the morale of the combatants. The *Geerarsa* narrator recites some of phrases in a very high pitch. This convention of the Oromo epic poem shows that recitation, the swift change of the variation of voice and the speedy tempo create an atmosphere of emotional excitement in the audience. The phonic stylistic features of the narrators accompany their recitation to reveal dramatic movements, sometimes leaping about with gesticulations as the emotional feelings and excitement increase. The movements and the actions often suit the spoken words. Like the heroic song of the Zulu of South Africa, the *Geerarsa* mimetic features involve

dramatization of the scenes and events described by using formalized gestures, holding or carrying a ceremonial spear, gun or sword, and singing in a melodious voice so that the song inspires his audience. Employing derogatory remarks, heaping insults on the cowardice and adversaries, and diminishing their status are common in the *Geerarsa*. The use of direct references and lauding names characterizes this genre; and the praises are directed publicly to relatives, parents, companions, prominent community figures and the community as a whole. Eulogizing domestic animals such as horses and dogs, and inanimate objects like spear, gun or sword is also common in the *Geerarsa* poetry. "First, something must be said about the praise names which often form the basis of formal praise poetry. These most often are given to people, but may also describe clans, animals, or inanimate objects, and they are usually explicitly laudatory" (Finnegan, 1970: 111).

In the Oromo heroic tradition, the epic narrators are decorated with multitudes of heroic symbols and wear feathers of ostrich, mane-like coiffure, skins of leopards (*qeerransa Afrikaa*) and lions; that hang from their arms and shoulders. In their several ways, these decorations tend to reinforce the hero's tremendous self-esteem and a sense of uniqueness. The *Geerarsa* poetry involves boasting marked by stirring emotions and romantic glorification of the patriots. The valour the victor demonstrates, the challenges he has faced, and the victory achieved in the course of battling with his adversaries are often expressed in such a way that his heroic action on the stage creates the image of a battlefield in which the audience is filled with great enthusiasm and courage. Generally, the story is narrated with blunt and descriptive language, sometimes trenchant and sometimes gentle. The singer criticizes harshly those who have no guts and elevates those who have demonstrated moral stamina in the face of dangers. The technique of combining both demerit and verbal rewarding creates a sort of balancing or equilibrium judgement in his poetic language. Like the heroic tales of other African societies, the Oromo epic literature does not merely deal with traditional national-pride, but also helps promote the new spirit of national feeling, which free societies of modern Africa need.

In form, style and content, the *Geerarsa* poetry has many distinguishing features. The language in which it is formulated is rich, subtly, and metaphorically used by the narrators. The structure of the constituents is terse, precise and incisive. The style is lofty and poetic in the narrative and all possible artistic effects can be drawn into the text. The Violently Marginalized Identity: Post-Empire and the Historical Development of African Protest Narrative The late 19th century could be defined as the age of dynamic movements wherein the force of nationalisms played the central role to move the world to a new order, characterized by polarization and animosity. It was also the period during which the great secular institutions and ideologies emerged. The turbulence and instability of the time which undermined the natural world order actually led many peoples of the globe to understand what was happening, to investigate the very foundation of the ideologies of the emerging forces and challenge the principles of new social and political forms. The economic, social and political gaps that had

been created by the totalitarian powers of the period terribly affected the multiethnic societies of the developing world, especially Sub-Saharan Africa.

The recent development of oral literary creativity and protest narrative in Africa can be attributed to the effects of post-colonialism, the continuing problems of decolonization and the building of democratic societies in the continent. Within the context of the postcolonial situation, the creative art in Africa is closely connected with the growth of a sense of national identity and such developments were anticipated during the late nineteenth century. The dominant themes of literary works of Africa, African American and the Caribbean are, therefore, studied as different responses to the problems of the new world order of post-colonialism. The past and present protest literatures in Africa are mainly the result of the rise of virulent nationalisms and the contradictory socio-economic structures they have created. The new African nations are the consequence of the expansion of empires and international events. The Oromo protest narrative, which is the outcome of militarism, annexation and the expansion programme of the nineteenth century aims at addressing the manifold problems surrounding the subjugated nation that has been trampled over by the empire-builders. "The rapid growth of empires was followed by settlements and the incorporation of many of African continents, either as crown colonies or through annexation" (King, 1980: 3). The emergence of new empire-builders in East Africa, the narrative construction of abstract images, a call for *homogenizing pluralism* (*heterogeneity*), the conquest and direct control of other people's lands are the particular phase of colonial and postcolonial period marked by complex problems and catastrophic events. The penetration of previously a free region (Oromiyaa) and the dislocation of the egalitarian form of the social organization of the Oromo by Ethiopian warlords and Emperors are part of this historic moment. The consequences of empowering empires and docile kingdoms were dominance, destabilization, political and racial tensions. The coming into being of Oromo heroic literature as a huge compelling national saga and an instrument of resistance is to explain in social and political terms, the imperial histories, its negative legacy of war and destruction.

The growing consolidation of the new type of feudal empire in the Horn of Africa and its expansion to the South after the 1870s was paralleled by the development of nationalist cultural movements marked by xenophobia, ethnic friction and division. The Oromo epic poems dramatize the way those movements brought about ceaseless confrontations of several decades in the Horn of Africa. In the historical development of both African and English literatures, what we see is that expansion and settlements of postcolonial period contributed to the rise of extreme nationalisms that had grown strident throughout the globe. These coupled with the change of cultures in the Western world after the First World War, the global recession of 1926, the 'Great Depression' which began in 1929, and the growth of Socialist ideologies strongly influenced the protest literatures of the 1920s and 1930s, both oral and written. The force of heroic literary works of the period made the empires increasingly irrelevant. The Oromo traditional literature, especially the *geerarsa*, remained a relevant subject of discourse

because it shares thematic content with protest literatures of the world.

"The same modernization which created new nations also produced its emerging literary tradition" (King, 1980: 25). In his research of the historical development of English literature, Bruce King has made it clear that an early sign of rapid industrialization and nationalism, which generated the Second World War, was at the same time to produce a new type of literature that can be found in Africa; and presumably he was referring to the coming into being of protest literatures which the Africans were using as modern weapons. He cited Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946) and Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country* (1948) as cases in point. These protest literary works were used in South Africa as transitional between an earlier kind of protest fiction and the new socio-economic and political conditions resulting from the themes of post-war times. The increased national and international importance of the mines of South Africa as a dominion of settlement may be compared with the gold mines and coffee production in Oromiyaa, which continued to be the centre of attraction for settlement. The protest idioms of the late Depression years (late 1920s) was transformed into the vocabulary of a search for national identity and we find striking similarities with the poetic language of the *Geerarsa* of *post-Rukkisa* (great recession and famine) of 1889-1892 in Oromiyaa.

As it often occurs in the early novels of protest in Africa, as for instance Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* (1950), concerning the disturbing situation in former Rhodesia (present Zimbabwe) of the war period, the *Geerarsa* explores the problems of unequal socio-economic and political structures, and subsequently the study of identity set within the context of contextual and political crises in post-conquest Oromo. As it frequently happens in such early national literatures, folk-literature provides a means to record Oromo social consciousness and the issue of moral problems.

Like the modern fictions, in the oral literature of war-times, there is always a mood of cultural and identity assertion. The characteristics of oral literary tradition, particularly heroic epic, include the investigation of national history and the criticism of the ruling power structures; and in this respect, the complex relationship of the war period literary genres to a wave of patriotism means the struggle for cultural roots, national liberation and the search for a new code of values which would bridge the past and present. According to the Oromo folklorist scholars, the past heroic tradition always serves as the solid basis for a mass culture. They believe that heroic literary tradition as the centre of the image of the noble past is studied to overcome a modern sense of fragmentation and loss of identity. A tendency to associate or connect oral literary history with extremist nationalist position is, therefore, inaccurate.

"The political and cultural reforms proposed by anti-colonial movements in such countries as India, Egypt, Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, and in the Caribbean, therefore, formed the fountain-head of what we now call post-colonialism" (Waugh, 2006: 343). With the increasing momentum after the end of World War II (after 1945), anti-colonialist movements took a more confrontational and no compromise approach to decolonization. Where deep settler colonization prevails, as for instance in Kenya,

Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Nigeria, and many other colonized countries, the colonial powers clung on disparaging methods and exercised particular brutality. The political and literary movements in the violent world resulted in the retrieval and animation of the indigenous literatures as important vehicles of national self-expression and therefore, of resistance to the colonial exclusion of the natives as uncivilized irrational. In the process of the struggle for cultural and political freedom, or in one sense, decolonization, the revolutionary leaders and patriotic intellectuals such as Ghandi in India, Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya (see *Mau Mau Uprising*), Frantz Fanon in Algeria (*The Wretched Earth*), Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, Ngugi Wa Thiongo in Kenya (*Decolonizing the Mind*), Chinua Achebe in Nigeria (*Things Fall Apart*), Steve Biko in South Africa (*Black Consciousness*), and many others helped define the essence, the broad concepts and paradigms of what has become the study of colonial empire. These, together with *Orientalism* (1978) of Edward W. Said and *Negritude Movements* led by immigrant writers, like Aime Césaire, Albert Memmi and Senghor in the 1920s and 1930s, provoked a widespread colonial discourse, which reinforced protest literature of postcolonial periods. By and large, these literary movements and influences in Africa have made a significant contribution to the growth of Oromo protest literature, the *Geerarsa.* One of the major characteristics of this heroic epic is that it is a reaction against the disruptive influence of the feudal system in Ethiopia. Many heroic poets still believe that it is part of their historical mission to write and reach back to the poetic tradition of their hero ancestors so that they can give a new life to the treasured oral art of the past.

To be marginalized is to be removed from history. Post-conquest literature or more appropriately protest literature of postcolonial is often a painful and highly complex means of fighting one's way into empire-made *reductionism theory*. The optimism and traditional egalitarian processes of post-conquest Oromiyaa (see Legesse's book 2000) were increasingly threatened by worsening developments in unhealthy ethnic relations marked by friction, misunderstanding, wars and bitterness; and these were eventually attended by the literary epic of the oppressed group. The new wave of migrant settlements, the mounting of militarism in the Horn of Africa after the 1890s and empowering the rising feudal overlords continued to corrode Oromo social cohesion, cultural and literary heritage. Thematically, post-empire protest narratives and writings in Oromiyaa are, therefore, deeply marked by the experiences of cultural and economic exclusions.

In this chapter, I have tried to examine the way a challenge to feudal empire and literature of imperial and post-imperial reveals itself. Notoriously, following the conquest of the 1880s, the great plight of the Oromo began. The conquest and the whole image of the powerless population can be summarized as scenes of carnage, devastation, falling apart, eviction and displacement.

> If anything else, by offering us insight into the imperial imagination, the texts of empire give some purchase on the occlusions of human loss

> that operated in colonial representation. The effects of empire on the colonized peoples, and colonized responses to invasion, usually appear as mere traces in the writing of the time. Reading of imperial texts suggest, therefore, how it was possible for a world system which presided over the lives of millions to legitimate itself by way of myth and metaphor while at the same time masking suffering. Colonial writing is important for revealing the ways in which that world system could represent the degradation of other human beings as natural (Boehmer, 2005: 21).

For those of us who by force of circumstances have continued to live under the stifling feudal empire of *reductive polarization* as it entails gabbaar-landlord relations, I am fully convinced that there is always a sense of moral and historical responsibility which is attached to the literature and culture we write as scholars and humanists. I also believe that it is incumbent on us to alter or dismantle abstract formulas which dichotomize humanity; dismissive and potent kinds of thought that take human mind away from truths about human history, literature and culture into realms of fictitious ideology, irrational and commanding discourse, confrontation and sophisticated treason.

"The nationalism the empire generated, the race antipathies, played a critical part in British society…as empire grew, identity was defined against the inferior state of being which the colonized were said to represent" (Boehmer, 2005: 31). Within the context of colonial and postcolonial times and influences, African empires of the past can be understood as the extension of other virulent empires of the world wherein broader imperial identity superimposed the identity of the oppressed and amalgamating or as Boehmer says, bracketing together different ethnic groups that serve the interest and will of the dominant. This kind of social stratification in the developing world eventually generated what is known as postcolonial identity of contradictory form marked by cultural strife and social disharmony. The Oromo heroic literature is part of African protest discourse and it offers us a detailed account of the complex antagonisms which led to human predicament.

Heroic literature is mainly the consequence of marginalization and economic disempowerment. It is a criticism of empire and its aftermath. The protest literary theory and practice reveal that post-empire discourse covers the distinctive problematic issues inherent in contradictory socio-political structures. These issues encompass the emerging fields, like minority studies, Gender studies, African studies, African American studies, Caribbean studies, Latin American studies, Third World studies, Chicano studies and others. This aspect of literature thus includes all peoples, literatures and cultures that have been affected by imperial movements and hegemonic control from the moment of colonization to the present. This means, the *Geerarsa* in its content is the narrating back to the crisis of the empire with an emphasis on the correction of the socio-economic, political and cultural problems it has created.

> Every single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize,

> bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort. And sadder still, there always is a chorus of willing intellectuals to say calming words about benign or altruistic empires, as if one shouldn't trust the evidence of one's eyes watching the destruction and misery and death (Said, 2003: xvi).

With the passing of time, the Ethiopian empire, like other empires of the past, developed its own forms of self-validation and created a momentum to justify a widely pervasive sense of correctness. "Bowing to the prerogative of uniqueness, both lay and scholarly writings on Ethiopian politics generally eschew the conceptual tools and the theoretical apparatus that govern an inquiry into social process in the developing countries and discard the conventional standard and criteria normally applied to other African societies" (Markakis, 1974: 2). The Ethiopian empire enjoyed the stereotyped construction of uniqueness and similarly the sanctity of the imperial office was an antique theme derived from the ideas of divine kinship-*Seyuma Egziabher* (see Levine 1965: 151). Throughout its periods, the imperial writers borrowed sophistications and many tempting ideas from others that would serve imperial ideology, exaggerated more than ever, the angelic stories, supremacy and the mystic power of the makers (autocratic rulers); as well as the importance of living up to their abstract myths and *utopian visions*. In essence, the *Geerarsa* narrative captures these dominant moods and the ideology of greatness of post-empire times.

Literary History: The Geerarsa as a Genre of the Heroic Age

"If literature has become important to the study of Africa's history and culture in a variety of disciplines ranging from anthropology to natural sciences, it is because it constitutes an indelible record of the continent's long past, its complicated present and its future possibilities" (Gikandi, 2003: xii). The protest narratives are subject to historical conditions and become prominent in specific circumstances at particular times. The major historic episodes of Oromo literary history have been linked with a turning point in the protest movements of the late 19th century in East Africa. The *Geerarsa* poetry as a powerful and compelling subject is often viewed by the Oromo as an instrument of creating the willing acceptance of people to make their own free world; and to me that is what human greatness means. In much the same way as other African countries, Oromiyaa remained a politically vibrant region in the Horn. This chapter depicts the way politics draws on the art of rhetoric and how the heroic narrative within this paradigm has been exercised as a powerful weapon of resistance.

> The hurrahs, the cries, the injuries, the encouragements, the allocutions, confound with the noise of the cavalry, the buzzing of shields, the grown of horns, the rattling of iron which come sparkling into collision with each other. The dying muster, their last strength to animate their side insult their enemy: *Oh! you, true sons of man, brothers of my blood, true children of my mother, alelli, aleli [haleeli-literally, no retreat]…courage to the death!*

Avenge the blood that is flowing out of my veins; avenge my life that is going under my eyes….Be jealous of honor of my name; protect my widow and my orphans (Kanno, 2005: 324). The extract reveals mixed feelings: great pleasure, the lament,

the bitterness of the war times and the undiminishing heroic spirit of the Oromo as witnessed by Martial de Salviac in 1901.

For the last one-century, many heroic narratives of the Oromo focus on protest in which the eminent hero nationals, who demonstrated great courage and patriotic feelings, have been highly eulogized and honoured. It presents the valour in flashbacks when the resistance was based on a truly heroic character and almost every generation is moved by the vibrant tone of defiance and brave spirit. Each hero poet fights gaily and gallantly and many of the poems of the *Gadaa* age reflect their confidence and national pride. The description of the natural setting helps the hero poet as a background when he wants to expand its special function in historical terms. The portrayal of the natural scenery suggests some grave situations that need prompt response. Therefore, the background of the mountain, the soil and the landscape in general, is to call up the difficult scenes the nation has been facing and the long journey to be made to reverse those violent scenes. The noun phrase *gaara* (mountain) is connected with the hero narrator to underline points concerning the issue of offering protection to the society that has fallen into dungeons of despair.

gaara gaaraan yaamanii
dafa dafaan yaamanii
biyyee biyyaan yamanii
biyya maqaan yaamanii
guyyaa dubbii ulkaa [olkaa], guyyaa dubbii ijaa, dhiira lolaaf yaamanii

a mountain is called by its name
urgent action requires urgent call
the soil is called by its country
a country is called by its name

in times of prompt action, in times of life and death, it is the heroes who answer the call.

> This may be properly called a literature of combat in the sense that it calls on the whole people to fight for their existence. It is a literature of combat because it moulds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; it is a literature of combat because it assumes responsibility and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space (Fanon in Leitch, 2001: 1589).

The personal urgency and the narrator's self-assurance were attended by keen anxiety that a heroic poem boldly assumes a prophetic stance at a moment of national emergency. The poet paints a view of the countryside. He uses the attractive landscape as the background to describe the natural world of freedom and the beauty linked with that world when one's land is protected at the cost of the life of the rising generation. The portrayal of the mountain, the urgent action, the soil and the homeland is to inform the audience that everything has its own beauty in its balanced form. This is connected with the vivid account of the hero combatants, without which the dramatic

landscape of Oromiyaa cannot maintain a perfect fascination and the society seldom enjoys independent existence.

the Lord has made the dawn appear
the day that will brighten my victory
at the back of the frightened and the fugitive!
bring me into the rank of heroes (Kanno, 2005: 331)

Heroes are born, not created. The poem depicts the promising hope and the bright day of victory to come through heroic action. The term *dawn* is to refer to freedom and the great joy connected with it. When we probe into the historical elements of protest literature, we find that the patriotic poets never allow themselves to be suppressed or dictated by fear; and thus they air their views freely without concealing every single event. Moreover, the epic poetry, which reflects the existing social and political situation of a particular country, is presented to the audience in a form of dramatic narrative. Since the audience may not have full access to the whole events of the battlefield, like historians and journalists, they are more interested in the dramatic performance of the hero actor or singer and the way he projects objective reality. In listening to their work, we must always use reasonable judgement and critical analysis so that we will be able to shape the material on the basis of artistic criteria.

The essential benefit of the poets is not to have the ready-made world with which to deal; rather, to be able to see in depth its complexities and contradictions: the beauty and ugliness, the boredom and the liveliness, the atrocities, the horror and the glory, which ultimately define its true image. These complexities characterize the subject matter of poetry in general and the protest narrative in particular.

The outstanding episodic events of a particular battlefield are often carefully united so that the heroic story will be more powerful and plausible. The oral artist has made a vivid description of the great battle of *Calanqoo* between the Oromo and settler soldiers or *Nach-labaash* in which enormous damages occurred and hundreds of thousands of civilians and great men were killed. He has portrayed the horrific image of this battle in which the tragic experience of the martyrs has been recorded. The dead bodies of his fellow men and women that had been stretched upon the ground moved the poet to deep emotion. He has strongly emphasized the spirit of the late 1880s in the history of the Oromo when the *Nach-labaash* army decimated civilian population to ensure autocratic hegemony in the South. In the following verse passage of the *Geerarsa*, the whole scene of tragic grief rises before our eyes and remains with us through the long account of the fight. It is appropriate that such resistance should take place in this wild surrounding, the mountain, which is displayed by the narrator as the graveyard for hundreds of thousands of the massacred civilians.

The First World War created a horrifying image across the globe. In four-years (1914-1918), over nine million lives were lost. Similarly, the wars in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Congo, Uganda, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia and other places are also the worst nightmare scenarios in the modern history. The Mutilation of Arms and Breasts at

Aanole in 1886 and the Massacre at Calanqoo in 1887, and many more untold bitter stories of the Oromo people are the outcome of unjust war waged by the ambitious warlords and virulent despots. In general, the *conflict model pluralism* in Africa and the wars it has created not merely resulted in human tragedies of years, but also caused the psychological wounds in the minds of the survivors. The socio-cultural dislocation of war times very often gives rise to political narratives or more appropriately to literature of resistance. Like the unjust wars elsewhere, the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s wars in Oromo homeland, Oromiyaa, were marked by the death of more than *five million* Oromo civilians; it also saw the death of the *Gadaa* democratic conduct, literary expressions and the traditional values. On the other hand, it gave birth to the struggle for Oromo nationhood, the determination of the next generations to face the facts of the modern world and narrate the stories about them in vibrant voices.

Lola Calii 'Calanqoo' himadhu moo ni dhiisa
manguddoo keenya gatee arriwaan gaara ciisa
dardara keenya fixee filaawaan gaara ciisa
hayyoota keenya gatee bokkuwaan gaara ciisa
kabiirran keenya gatee tasbiiwaan gaara ciisa
shamarran keenya gatee calleewaan gaara ciisa
eessaanan galee rafa dhiigatu garaa naciisa.
the battle and the massacre at Calanqo, may I tell the story or not
exterminating our elderly men, their grey hairs lay in the mountain
exterminating our young men, their combs (usually wooden combs)
lay in the mountain exterminating our wise men, their sceptres lay in the mountain
exterminating our religious scholars, their religious ornaments lay in the mountain
exterminating our young ladies, their ornamental beads lay in the mountain
I have an immense amount of blood in my stomach,
and so how can I go home and sleep.

As Levine (1965: 3-4) argued, one needs not to be blind to the drawbacks of feudal dominance and to recognize these and other important benefits for the Ethiopian empire of the past in which many peoples were maltreated, free peoples reduced to slavery and unique cultures decimated. The unfavourable reputation of the totalitarian rulers in the South has been due largely to the example of the unscrupulous governors and soldiers whose worst impulses were at times allowed free play.

The hero narrator laments the destruction of his homeland and the loss of lives during the invasion and conquest of 1886-1887. Misery, trauma, grief, frustrations, in short, the tragedy of contradictory pluralism are the most affecting touches in the *Geerarsa* poetry. As the revolt against the subversive land reform had fallen through, the hero poet recorded the lament of the time without, of course, forgetting to mention the tragic dignity of those brave men and women who in the end failed. The poet keeps his eyes on his characters and their actions without wasting energy on irrelevant detail. He concentrates on the concise theme, which is pertinent to the situation and provides the authentic image of the whole episode. In general, the protest poem of "*Calii*

Calanqoo" brings the event closer to the people's life and makes it substantial.

It may not be enough for the poems to be interesting unless they depict where the intent of the heart and mind goes, and unless they lead the heart of the reader as they want. Explaining the appropriateness of the language of poetry, Adams (1992: 69) says, "As people's faces smile, in a similar way they sympathize with those who weep. If you wish me to weep, you must first feel grief yourself….Sad words are appropriate to a sorrowful face; furious words are fitting to the angry …serious words to the solemn. For nature first forms us within to meet all the changes of fortune." The skilful poets are endowed with the qualities of creating the concrete image within the power of their art; they encapsulate many of the central themes of every passing scene and make people rejoice or impel them to outrage, burden them down to the ground with a heavy grief or lift up their spirits to celebrate euphoric occasions.

War and tyranny are the ugly aspects of human experiences which great civilizations of our time and modernity have failed to abolish. Its destructive effect has left the unhealing wound in the minds of the new generations. The poet expresses his outrage at the harsh realities and agonizing situation he witnesses. He shares with us his observations so that we may be able to grasp as clearly as possible the feelings of deep sorrow and despair evoked by the subject. These feelings could better be thought of as meaning evoked by careful contemplation of the poem in its manifold and somewhat subtle ways of treating the text so as to lead the audience on to a view of war and the melancholic state intrinsic to an art. The poem, which powerfully mirrors the awful nature of war and conquest of 1887 at *Calanqoo*, is at the same time a forceful subject which reconstructs the horrible image in the conquered land, Oromiyaa, and the way the indigenous population has been trampled over by the tyrant rulers.

This heroic narrative reminds us of the worst case scenario of the late 19th century when the Oromo not merely faced enormous challenges, but also were decimated when they resisted a utopian approach to pluralism. It describes the horrendous episode the poet has experienced during the battle of *Calanqoo*. The term *Calii* refers to massacre. The poet's anger finds expression in words such as *arriwaan, filaawaan*, *bokkuwaan*, *tasbiiwaan* and *calleewaan*; and they mark the actual meaning of the lost battle and the painful experience. The situation is described with realism, which not only influences the audience, but also moves them to tears and action. The oral artist employs these allusive terms in order to illustrate the horrifying vividness of the situation. He narrates the whole situation by unfolding the clear image of the massacre at *Calanqoo*, together with the heavy damage inflicted on the society. The expression *dhiigatu garaa naciisaa* (line seven) reveals total rage and a sense of revenge without which the combatant hero cannot get mental peace. The extent and the horrors of the catastrophic situation are depicted as great darkness in the history of Oromiyaa.

"Wealth without bravery has little right of consideration by the Oromo. This great esteem for military feats tends to increase the power of the state" (Kanno, 2005: 333). The *Geerarsa* narrative is usually linked with specific socio-political and historical

contexts, as well as a particular turning-point within which it is to be narrated. There are direct references concerning the Oromo history, the social and power relationships, the system of values and ideas. In terms of form, style and thematic content, the Oromo heroic epic has various distinguishing characteristics. The language, the rich vocabularies in which the poem is formulated, the variations and the dramatic scenes created by those variations are marked by imagery and flashbacks. The mode of presentation of the literary epic has special features. Invariably, the narration of the *Geerarsa* is accompanied by a participating crowd in which the narrator who is surrounded by families, fellow friends and lineage groups is applauded and received with dignity. The problem of complex hegemony in Oromiyaa during the feudal empire of several decades (1889-1974), the painful life of the *gabbaar* society, the revolt to get back the expropriated land, lamenting the destruction of the rich countryside and the hopelessness of the periods are all brought to the open on the stage of performance.

In historical and political terms, the *Geerarsa* narrative reveals the struggle against indignity, a style of domination and having authority over the disfranchised. A wave of revisionist writings and repression in Oromiyaa was also compounded by the total distortion of the image of the society; and this fuelled the confrontation of the rulers and the ruled in a changing political market. The evolving of *Civil Rights* and the ever increasing of protest movements has now re-directed heroic literature and cultural awareness in an extraordinary manner. Modernity, then has come to acquire a positive and negative narrative: the first insists on the ideals of self-conscious subjectivity and the desire for freedom; the other is driven by an acute sense of disenchantment…. In Africa, these two narratives have been complicated by the experience of colonization, since it was colonialism that introduced what were considered to be the institutions of modern life in many African communities, while at the same time depriving people of the rights that were associated with the project of modernity. In these circumstances, the ideals of modernity were bound to run into conceptual problems, because if colonialism was to be the major agent for transforming

> pre-colonial societies into modern polities, it was difficult to reconcile the notion of free self-conscious individuals with colonial domination (Gikandi, 2003: 337).

The extract encapsulates the problems of imperial narrative and the controversy of modernity in postcolonial Africa. The narrative construction of the greatness of Ethiopian empire and the excessive force used against the oppressed people to justify the uniqueness of that empire are not only contradictory to modern thinking, but also have created many untold tragic events in the Horn of Africa in general, and Oromiyaa in particular. As I have repeatedly stressed, subsequent to the rejection of multiculturalism and the plural principle of mutual respect and tolerance, the Oromo entered a new phase in the troubled history marked by economic disempowerment, cultural sinking, the gradual disintegration of social structures and the established egalitarian institutions; the time when a sense of loss of national identity fractured the nation. The *Geerarsa* thus appeared in '*an age of national struggles*' as a response to

the unsuccessful imperial modernism when the whole issue of national culture and national entity was under discussion throughout the Sub-Saharan Africa. In the analysis of protest oral literature, *we have to go back and put in place the dislocated African sense of history and nationhood.* This can happen only if the heroic poetry is understood *as identity marker and a tool of enforcing the existence of an alternative*, which can help the society to grasp the true meaning of freedom.

The heroic narrative has a considerable value for history because it is part of the struggle for survival and reflects some of the strongest aspirations of the human spirit. It still remains of permanent value in the history of many nations. The heroic success that demands honour and distinction can be gained in many fields of action. Heroism in a wider contemporary concept may not only be limited to the combatant nationals in uniform. Rather, it also encompasses all dedicated professionals: *sportsmen and women, musicians, singers, artists, academics and many others who bring home greatest triumphs and are lauded, loved, honoured and rewarded by their nations as heroes and heroines.* Since honour is often achieved by demonstrating superior devotion and performance than other men, there is essentially an element of fierce struggle and confrontation. This is why a lot of poems reveal themselves in the form of boasts and panegyrics, which have to be translated into actions. For the successful function of his poetry, the narrator must pick the core events with skill and identify issues that will capture the imagination of the living audience.

The antagonistic human relations and the *conflict-based pluralistic formula* that have been imposed by militaristic governments reinforced self-assertion of the Oromo society and this assertion is represented by the wise poets who serve as keen observers of events. The amalgamation of different cultures without considering their equal status and the emergence of oral narrative as a powerful arm of maintaining the cultural identity characterize a process of resistance narrative in Sub-Saharan Africa, of which Oromiyaa is the part. After the 1870s imperial period and the Arab expansion programme, numerous antithetical co-existing cultures and traditions emerged in the African continent; and African folklore has grown out of those cultures as the identity marker of diversified groups. Therefore, the indigenous genre as social protest represents the African voice against the new order of polarization, which is the breeding ground for indignity and corrupt economic structures. Within the context of the growing of antithetical traditions and the *mechanical homogenization of pluralism*, the *geerarsa* narrative is an expression of socio-political problems, the contemporary challenges and contradictions, which need sensible solutions.

"Heroes are champions of man's ambition to pass beyond the oppressive limits of human frailty to a fuller and more vivid life, to win as far as possible a self-sufficient manhood, which refuses to admit that anything is too difficult" (Bowra, 1952: 4). The admiration for great deeds, especially heroic performance, lies deep in the human heart. The epic poetry is always remarkable for its unfailing objective character. It is not only objective, but also devoted to unfolding the historical truth validated by its audience.

ammallee koofii lolaa
ammalllee koofii lolaa
qaataa abbaa Abdellaa
hojjaamessa makkallaa
qabbanoofnee dhumannee yaa goojee abbaa farraa
nurratti murteessinaan, murtii du'aa namarraa
yaa garaa jabeenna isaa abbaa murtii farrisaa
nama dhibbaa fi soddomaa seera malee fannisaa?
once again, the hero of war time
once again, the hero of war time
the trigger of the gun of Abdella's father
the unshakable pillar with great energy
we were totally frozen oh, the king with demonic spirit
we are under the sentence of death; and how horrible it is!
oh! a treasonable judge, how cruel he is to pass the death penalty!
you hanged hundred-thirty men unlawfully

The demand for the abolition of the master-servant type of human relations often leads to the creation of what is known as a new literature of the marginalized people. From the 1870s onward, the entire continent of Africa was in political upheaval and rocked by a series of wars. As the natural boundaries of nations ceased to exist and the new empire builders emerged from the ruins of *old* empires, the continent faced the dark era in history. The economic momentum generated by modern capitalism in its powerful prime also fuelled raw aggression and the naked imperial expansion. The poem unfolds this historic moment in East Africa, Oromiyaa, during which the Oromo people experienced cultural shocks and the devastating effects of the new global order of post-empire.

> Every Oromo is a soldier. The warrior temperament is born with him; he does not at all have the need for our system of conscription and raise the troops to enter into the military profession. A child…longs for the day when his father puts a spear in his hand, as much as the gentlemen of the Middle Age wished to be armed knights. A grown man…invests with the need of his own defense as that of contributing to the common defense. He has his own person, his family, his relatives, his country [in this context Oromiyaa] to protect and to cover with glory of his high feats. He lives to bequeath to his children a name illustrious and feared by enemy (Kanno, 2005: 308-309).

As Kanno has put it, the Oromo nation is endowed with heroic spirit in the highest quality. The geerarsa, which contributed immensely to the survival of the society, has continued to be a unifying image and is a medium of transmitting a strong sense of self-possession.

The functions of literary nationalism in the regulation of social order, needs to be a qualified by taking into account cultural and historical circumstances. If we examine in political terms, folk traditions in different historic periods, that is, the 'Old World' of pre-capitalism and the 'New World' marked by capitalist domination and power imbalance, it is clearly evident that friction occurs between the co-existing cultures and traditions in the countries that are modelled on the colonial system. In the polarized societies of unequal power, heroic literature reveals the adverse effects of cultural dichotomy. The North and South Americans were colonized by the Europeans who transported millions of African slaves to their overseas empires. As the result of this, the country experienced co-existing and interacting traditions, which eventually generated the folklore society and *patriotic nationalism*. The indigenous Indian, the colonizing Spanish, Portuguese, French and English; the African-Americans, together with the 19th and 20th centuries immigrants from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East, in short, the national and regional socio-cultural and political situations have been shaped by the new historical and environmental factors. Being the member of the New World, the continent of Australia also experienced cultural barriers; and its folklore literature has been divided between the Aborigines and the others. After the 1880s postcolonial events and settlements, the African continent experienced similar historical situation. The protest literatures in modern Africa are, therefore, the result of global historical and cultural changes.

A hero poet must not compromise their moral or political position by concealing or negating the truth. It is, therefore, necessary to unveil vices with a view of dissuading so that the work of art he produces is not merely allowed to grow, but also popularized. The oral artist tries to paint both the chaotic world of war and the euphoric times of victory and peace. He celebrates the triumph achieved and at the same time laments the tragic effects of unjust war and the human tragedy resulted from that disorderly world led by perverse governments. With regard to this, Noakes (1988: 168-169) says, "Emotions are emitted in sounds and when sounds form a pattern, they are called tones. The tones of any orderly world are peaceful and lead to joy, its government harmonious; the tones of a chaotic world are resentful and lead to anger, its government perverse; the tones of a doomed state are mournful to induce longing, its people in difficulty. Thus, in regulating success and failure…nothing comes to poetry."

The expression *qabbanoofnee dhumannee* "we were totally frozen" illuminates the entire picture of being under the sentence of death and a pervading mood of fear and tension the Oromo nation experienced during the arrival of the empire builders. In lines three and four, the poet discusses his own physical stature and charisma by using figurative language. He emphasizes the significance of building self-esteem and defines himself by using allusive phrases, *qaataa* "trigger of a gun" and *makkallaa* "the unshakable pillar with great energy;" and these descriptive words are alluded to him to clarify his great personal quality, charm and fitness. The last four lines (5-8) are heavy criticism of the irrational judge who passed death sentence against 130 Oromo nationals.

Though heroic poetry has not flourished and persisted in the same old way, it still plays a great role as instructive subject in many parts of the world. There has never been and will never be a perfect nationhood without the transmission of heroic values. Thus, the protest narrative presupposes a view of existence in which the hero figures play a central role and exert their powers to ensure that existence. "But after all national pride is a legitimate pleasure and heroic poetry cannot fail at times to promote it" (Bowra, 1952: 30). The protest narratives express defiance, outrages, discontents, grievances, success, failure or misfortune, sadness and a state of euphoria. The verbal artist often uses a trenchant language of a defiant. In postcolonial terms, the *geerarsa* captures the problems of imperial modernism, the violently marginalized identity, and the changing scene in the conquered land in course of the struggle for self-realization.

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN DENMARK

Review Essay

Interculturality in Intellectual Practices: Art, Politics, Philosophy and Worldview

Antoon Van den Braembussche, Heinz Kimmerley and Nicole Note (Eds.), *Intercultural Aesthetics: A World Perspective,* Springer (Springer.com), 2009, pp. 217.

The editors of this volume inform that what they call *intercultural aesthetics* was formerly called *comparative aesthetics* and assert that this branch of knowledge is indispensable to enrich the nature and scope of current concepts of worldview. They quote Leo Apostel, a Belgian philosopher influential in the 20th century for defining a worldview: "A worldview is a coherent set of bodies of knowledge concerning all aspects of the world. This coherent set allows people to construct a global image of the world and to understand as many elements of their experience as possible. A worldview can in fact be perceived as a map that people use to orient and explain, and from which they evaluate and act, and put forward progresses and visions of the future" (p.1)

A century before, Wilhelm Dilthey spoke of "world views" (*Weltanshaungen*) as patterns of understanding (interpreting) life:

> The human world exists for the poet in so far as he experiences human existence in himself and tries to understand as it confronts him from outside…in understanding he projects all his inner experience into other human beings, and yet at the same time the unfathomable alien depths of another great being or a powerful destiny lead him beyond the limits of his own; he understands and gives shape to what he would never be able to experience personally. ("Poetry and Experience" 278).

But Dilthey confines the patterns of understanding life strictly to the Western intellectual history. His Eurocentrism considers only three such patterns —positivism objective idealism and daulistic idealism. Apostel's "world view", on the other hand, is a "global image" beyond any geographical or political topology, that is triggered by the current process of globalization in almost all the areas of human activities beyond the confinements of race, gender, religion and language. But can culture be globalized this way losing its very foundations (of race, religion and language) on which it stands, and the criteria by which it is identified? It seems rather too ambitious and ethereal to be acknowledged as a cognizable proposal. Certain cultural items might be or ought to be globalized, but not culture as a whole, a proposal completely absurd and meaningless. What is absolutely necessary is the process of cultural reciprocation, the very slogan and foundation of comparative studies in the whole range of intellectual pursuit ignoring any *centre* or *centrism*, predomination of either the East or the West. This reciprocation will bring up an healthy understanding of different intellectual ideas and doctrines without any aspiration for universalism, for, as Sussan Bassnett has correctly asserted, the very notion of universalism is an imperial or colonial "world view" to which cultural globalization falls a victim.

It is true, as the editors of this volume note, that one cannot ignore the increasing worldwide cross-fertilization and interpenetration of different cultures:

> The traditional leitmotiv of cultures that are profoundly embedded in nationalism is increasingly being challenged by new modes of post-national or even cosmopolitan citizenship. This global tendency toward differentiation and heterogeneity seems to be driven by new notions, experiences and expressions of cultural identity. In this sense contemporary art could be considered worldwide as a laboratory for building and exploring new *hybrid world views.* (P-2)

This *hybrid worldview* is not simply a juxtaposition of parallels, but construction of an integrated, organic perspective not only in the field of aesthetics, but in all other areas of learning as well. The central issue is the abolition of cultural binaries – superior/ inferior, white/black, Eastern/Western so on and so forth. But the absolute abolition of cultural barriers with a view to founding *one* culture is not only a utopia, but also a contradiction in terms that does not deconstruct culture but destroys the very idea of culture that presupposes the barriers of language, religion and race. It would be like reducing all the seven colours into only one: This vision of cultural reductionism is as fatal as the gradation of individual cultures. The editors write:

> Therefore, this book was conceived as an incentive to develop a truly intercultural aesthetics, which looks at art and the aesthetic experience in a cross-cultural setting, making room not only for new conceptual articulations but also for a new awareness of the pre-conscious and pre-conceptual ways of world-making… Indeed, the prospect of inter-cultural aesthetics is also intimately linked with the *intercultural turn* in Western as well as in non-Western philosophy. (p.2)

But the editors are trapped in a contradiction that cross-culturality or interculturality is not formation of a *hybrid culture* because the phrase implies differences in individual cultures structured in historical and social environments that are peculiar to those cultures. Before an ambitious amalganation of Abhinavagupta and Kant the editors/ authors ought to agree with David Fenner (2008 : qv) that the idea of the "aesthetic disinterest" or "aesthetic distance" emerges in the historical events of foundation of museums during the 16th-18th centuries. This decontextualization of art is absent in the history of classical India that originated the *rasa* theory and the ideas of *sâdhâra´¤kara´a* that can be compared with Kant's *senses communis* or *Einstimnung* or the "aesthetic disinterest" excepting only in terms of abstract philosophical perspectives. The scope and limits of transculturality or inter-culturality in aesthetics were attended to by the present reviewer in his paper read at the Bologna conference (2000). All such comparisons ought to be aimed at only reciprocation, but never at forming an hybrid aesthetic point of view. For example, the Sanskrit concept

of *adbhuta rasa* might be explained in terms of Kantian dichotomy of beauty and the sublime. But the ambitious critics must be warned that the concepts are never identical or even share an *equal* critical perspective. Besides, what I have repeatedly pointed out, Kantian notion of aesthetic experience/ attitude as *disinterested* is absolutely alien to the Indian view of *rasa* experience which is categorically distinguished from any sense of indifference. Abhinavagupta emphatically uses the expression *na tâ°asthyena* and states that the theatrical audience participates (*svâtrmânupraveúa*) in the performance: The *Bhagavadgit¢* asserts that all *sâttvic* actions are performed with enthusiasm (*uts¢ha* or interest), and theatrical experience is a *sâttvic* activity-- as Mammata andVisvanâtha state, *rasa* can be relished only when consciousness is dominated by *sattva* component (*sattvodrekât*). The editors' observations on this point are therefore notably superficial. Similarly, Rosa Gomez, in her chapter in the book, fancifully interprets *sth¢yîbhâva* as an archetypal emotion ignoring the fundamental idea that, according to Patañjali, followed by Abhinava, emotion is a function of *consciousness* (*citta-v¨tti*), whereas an archetype, according Karl Jung, is a phenomenon of collective *unconscious* (obviously, excepting this superficial interpretation, the chapter by Gomez is only a rehash). On the other hand, there are some critics (one which referred to by Grazia Marchiano, p.14) who interpret *rasa* experience as savourng an emotion deeply : "whoever deeply savours an emotion feels that hardened clot of one's individuality dissolve." Savouring an emotion deeply explains no definite experience, the adverb used here being vague and uncritical. Precisely, *rasa* is an emotion *savoured* or relished (*âsvâda*) and there is no difference between savouring of deep level and that of surface level.

To put the point precisely, an emotion is not *savoured* in our ordinary experience, whereas it is *savoured* in theatrical experience. Several other superficial approaches to the *rasa* theory (such as Kathleean Higgian, *JAAC*, 65.1, 2007) and their correlation with the Western critical tradition rather weakens the ground for an intercultural proposal.

Henk Oosterling prefers the term *inter* to *trans* on philosophical grounds: "I prefer the qualification "intercultural" and will avoid 'transcultural'. The latter at least in one meaning of *trans*- suggests an overarching discourse that 'unites' in transcending West and East. I think processes of interculturalization are far more complex and layered. No identity but differences trigger these processes of adopting and adapting, of informing through transformative performance. (p-20). As a successful strategy of the interculturality he cites an example of the war strategy of Colonel Rotkoff who used the traditional Japanese 17 syllabic haiku style to express his feelings about the chosen war strategy. Rotkoff is a Jewish intellectual working for the American intelligence since 2002 in preparing the invasion in Iraq. The very process of his operation is intercultural, because a Jewish intellectual utilizes Japanized Chinese knowledge of meditative verse in exercising a successful war strategy proving that war is an art and its success depends on intercultural practices- temporal and spatial transformations that are presupposed in this process of cross-cultural adaptation and cultivation.

"As an *inter* a medium seems transparent and neutral". Thus the term *inter* semantically covers the function of *trans* in mediating between cultures. Derrida says, every translation is always an interpretation. But interculturality serving as a medium of transportation of cultures is never neutral, because, to return to the Indian tradition, in order that a relationship be *sattvic* it must be sincere and cordial founded on tolerance, patience and enthusiasm. Similarly, interpretation should also be free from neutrality. Oosterling remarks that the methodological and ontological analysis of the *inter* in postmodernist thinkers such as Derrida, Foucault, Irigary, Deleuz, Lyotard and Nancy share the Nietzschean inspiration that art expresses differences in a non-discursive, experimental way enabling another communication. Thus art and aesthetic experience are the paradigms of interculturality. But in saying so when these thinkers refer to the origin of this interculturality in Japanese zen practices such as that of Dogen's *shotrogenzo*, traced particularly in Lyotard's analysis of Kant's sublime and his art-based proposal of an 'immaterialist materialism', they forget that the very root of Zen practices is the Indian Yogic meditation (Zen=Sanskrit *dhyâna*=meditation). Any way, Oosterling explores that the philosophers of difference (postmodernist) have gradually shifted their attention from the other to the inbetween, i.e., from respecting radical difference to the sharing of an in-between space, an *inter.* This is most explicitly formulated in the work of Jean-Lue Nancy. But whomever one reads finally they end up connecting an 'artificial' *inter* with a life style that Foncault coined 'aesthetics of existence'." Thus the *inter* now abolishes the differnce between the self and the other.

II

An important point in critical interaction and transaction is the conversion of critical idioms. For example, interpreting the Sanskrit poetic theories of *alañkâra* and *vakroti* as formalism and structuralism, or *dhvani/ rasa-dhvani* as ontological issues in terms as they are used in the Western critical tradition, might raise the question of validity and propriety. This method neither presupposes the critical domination of the Western tradition, nor does it aim simply at presenting the Sanskrit ideas for the non-Sanskrit, particularly, Western readers; nor is it also a critical adaptation. Even the method does not aim at *universalizing* the Western critical concepts and theories. Critics would object that this decontextualization of the millennium-old Sanskrit ideas by presenting them in the twentieth century- European critical idioms involves a serious anachronism — violation of the sociological principles of an individual culture. The objection sustained. But, then, interculturality appears only an hallucination or a utopia. On the other hand, interculturality is bound to be a decontextualization; it is different from transculturality in so far as no culture is transplanted on the other. This interculturality as a cultural transaction is inevitable for the survival and progress of intellectual relativity as is commercial transaction inevitable for the survival of human life itself.

Thus, presentation of the critical ideas of different cultures on a single platform spontaneously exhibits the requirements that are shared mutually by way of intellectual transaction. One might call this platform a global market of cultural ideas open for

voluntary *exchange* of commodities rather than coercive *imposition* of any dominating producer or salesman. Interculturality is a market for exchanging commodities where a skilful salesman is responsible for convincing the consumers or co-salesmen about the value of the commodity he deals in. Obviously, this exchange of commodities does not aim at universalizing the value of any commodity, although any such universalization is only a possibility depending upon the choice, need and taste of the consumers. Millennium-old commodities can very well cater to the need, choice and taste of the contemporary consumers eager to appropriate, adapt and assimilate them in their life-style, and, therefore, they can most reasonably be updated in their relevant perspectives.

III

Interculturality is, then, exchange or transaction of traditions without any interference with each other's identity. This reciprocation needs tolerance in understanding and sensibility in appreciation of the characteristic features of different individual culturs — an activity that might help reconstruct and reorient some of them as necessary for human relationship, not with any ambitious programme for univeralization. There are certainly some characteristic features of a culture that cannot be assimilated into those of another, as, for example, Oosterling observes, Japanese *geido* cannot be integrated into Western aesthetics, nor can Japanese spirituality be traced in European continental philosophy. (p.35).

Robert Wilkinson writes on aspects of the Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitaro drawing from it some *general lesson* (?). But his discussion projects that such genralization is impossible. Nishida's view of aesthetic experience as identical with the European Romantic aesthetics does not match the classical Indian view that distinguishes between the two. Similarly, Nishida does not agree with the Kantian difference between formal beauty and beauty that depends upon content: "In my view, there is no beauty without content", Nishida writes, "in the beautiful, there must be an internal life that can be expressed, and the expression of pure internal life is always felt as the beautiful." (p.71) Interculturality, therefore, does not aim at any generalization or universalization of aspects of individual cultures. Projection of differences (as Willkinson does) is also a function of interculturality. The observer thereby clarifies the specificity of aspects that cannot be interculturally transacted, although a suggestion for rethinking and revision is always there.

But some of the essays collected in the volume do not reflect any points for intercultural perspectives. There are of course some other essays that highlight a conceptual issue in its multidisciplinary perspective as treated in two different countries, for example, Everlyn Nicodemus's treatment of trauma experience in literature, visual arts, cultural studies in Australia and Netherlands. The volume thus appears a noble venture in presenting the ideals and objectives of intercultural studies in the areas of aesthetics and literary criticism.

A.C. Sukla

Book Reviews

Paul Crowther, *Defining Art, Creating the Canon: Artistic Value in the Era of Doubt,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007, pp.268.

In the era of anti-foundationalism the value, canonical status and the future of art have been suspect. The analytic treatment of art during the second half of the twentieth century denied the experiential aspect of art, and the colonial elitism defined art in terms of its formalistic aspects that are only "significant". The European "Enlightenment" also sounded a strong colonial voice in the guise of intellectual domination. When the formalist and symbolist (expressionist) theories faded out by the influence of Duchampian tradition that ignored the Aristotelian concept of art as a "making" (*poçsis*) in favour of a "thing" designated by the artist as also enfranchised by a group of people (an institution) as art, Aristotelian *mimesis* lost its metaphysical status (not physically made by artists but available as "readymades") in favour of a social function of serving as "props" in games of make-believe. The last century thus witnessed a great exhibition of theories that tended to allow the audience by their fashionbable and fanciful decoration rather than explore the fundamentals of the truth behind them. In fact, when the very notions of fundamentals and foundations were questioned and in the style of the jesting Pilot, were rejected callously, the fundamental notions of truth, canon, value, utility were all declared meaningless and deceptive illusions — ignoring the very truth that proposers of these notions were themselves in great illusions and very soon they would be trapped themselves in the network of illusions when truth would reveal itself.

The denial of any property specifically "aesthetic", that defines "art" in favour of a context-oriented view of art (the so-called "institutional theory"), as also the "cultural theories" involving feminism, post-colonial, Frankfurt School Sociology, Michael Foucault's historical anthropology, Jacque Lacan's post-structuralist psychoanalysis, has questioned two vital issues: (1) whether art's canonic values can be philosophically justified and (2) whether art has a future? Crowther answers these questions in the positive and asserts that there is a conceptual connection between the answers.

Another important factor that determines the issue of normative value of art is what the author calls *cultural exclusion* either *implicit* or *explicit*. The dominating aesthetic thought is guided by the supposedly superiority of Western critical tradition that excludes the ideas of non-Western cultural heritage. For example, the concepts of 'art' and the "aesthetic" are themselves of Western origin, and till the end of the twentieth century the Eurocentric cultural tradition has been the ruling impact. At least one of the remarkable impact of Derrida's deconstructionism has been the abolition of binarism in all spheres of thought. Its anti-foundationalism has also abolished the superiority-inferiority, self-other, white-black racism, gender division, and though in association with Marxism, the class division as well. Critics, on the other hand, have misused / abused the ideas of Foucault and Marx in their efforts of universial application whereas they are meant for the Western context. Foucault's archaelogy of Western culture and Marxist class theory have limited application in so far as they have propounded their cultural and social theories on the basis of the history of European culture - not of world culture in general. Marx's three-phase social history comprising slavery, feudalism and industrialisation cannot be applied to the history of other cultures with equal strength. Indeed, feudalism as a phase in the history of Indian society has been duly controversial. Similarly, Foucault's study of sexuality and other cultural features, though highly persuasive, as is also Althusser's State Apparatus theory, their claim to universiality cannot be asserted. Susan Bassnett has even observed that the very notion of cultural universality is a colonial attitude - no phenomenon of a particular culture can claim universality, and, therefore cannot be considered as a model in any critical discourse.

Crowther's observation that the ideas of 'art' and the 'aesthetic' are strictly European (Western) is mostly justified. At least in the Indian context, as the present reviewer has studied much earlier (1977, 2003), these ideas have no parallel concepts. Art as derived from the Latin *ars* (Greek *technç*) originally means skill whereas the Sanskrit word *œilpa* means a collection. Similarly, there is no word denoting a property or experience in the Sanskrit vocabulary that can be parallel to the English term 'aesthetic'. When the different categories of *œilpa* are counted as *art*, it is only an adaptation of a critical term, and conversion of critical idioms that sometimes leads to a presupposition that the Western culture is superior to the Indian.

The two major philosophers of art Crowther attacks are George Dickie, the "Institutional theorist" and Arthur Danto, the "Designation theoriest" both of whom are exclusionists because they have ignored other non-Western cultures while defining art exclusively on their contemporary Western artworks (such as that of Duchamp) only. Kendal Walton is also another target of Crowther who proposes to define art in terms of its intrinsic significance :

> Institutional definitions of art and antifoundationalist approaches both misrepresent the nature of art's high cultural status. I justify its status on normative grounds. This involves explaining why art is intrinsically significant, and how this significance becomes an object of appreciation. I start from the fact that the image, qua sensible or imaginatively intended object, is an aesthetic configuration. *When an image's style of making is original (or, at the very least individual) it characterizes its subject matter from the creator's view point and thereby creates a distinctive kind of aesthetic unity which cannot be derived from other sources. This is art.* (p.9)… My definition … focuses on the origins of artistic meaning as well as its specialised pursuit through art as a social practice. For this reason, my defination is better described *per-functional* in Davies's terms. (p-5).

Crowther thus accepts the definitions of art taken into account by Stephen Davies (1991). Art according to him is an "aesthetic image" made for its own sake distinguished

from the images meant for other purposes such as providing information, pursuasion and practicing rituals, and *style* is the link between the aesthetic structure and image as also the very core of art's interpretative power. He claims that his normative approach to art privileges the intrinsic significance of art that is absent in the institutional and antifoundational approaches. "This is a more complex approach than formalism or expressionism. It is based on that which enables formal and expressive qualities to be significant. In particular, it conceives art as a mode of *making images* wherein the world is interpreted rather than reflected."

It seems, the author proposes an anti-realist approach to art as an image of reality, coming back to the Aristotelian "probable imitation", interpretation of reality following always the principles of probability and necessity: "In historical terms, the concept 'art' has developed around a distinctive class of mimetic artifacts… Now, of course, developments in twentieth- century Western modernism indicate, superficially, that a mimetic approach is no longer viable. But this conclusion has been drawn much too readily. *The explanatory scope of mimesis has been left undeveloped rather than refuted."* (64) Thus, according to the author, the Duchampian modernist visual art extends the scope of mimesis rather than reject it, and this tradition counts art in a peripheral or honorific sense. Art is a making (*poiçtikç*) by the artist, not "ready-mades" (simply arranged by the artist). Style as a linking factor is related to medium, subject matter, composition and comparison of one art work with another — depending upon the taste of a person shaped by and shaping a particular cultural context. Therefore stylistic originality, in a comparative historical context, forms an axis of art's normative significance.

The Aristotelian mimesis as the core factor of art, once again, points to the universality of this issue which the present reviewer expounded long ago in 1977. The Sanskrit term *œilpa* that might be taken connotatively parallel to the Western concept of *mimetikai technai,* or art is interpreted as a *pratirÂpa* or image -*Yadavai pratirûpam tatchilpam. Úilpa* might be literally different from *art* but conceptually both the terms refer to an image. However, Crowther's extension of image beyond its visual arena is nothing new. Much earlier, W.J.T. Mitchell's illuminating discussions of the concept of image in its multidimensional perspectives are still fresh. Moreover, his use of the word significance in the expression "normative significance" is as imprecise as Bell's epithet "significant" used for form.

David Fenner, *Art in Context: Understanding Aesthetic Value,* Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008, pp.350.

The book is a critique of value of an artwork, and its author argues that this value is to be accounted for in terms of the context, as a whole, not in terms of the formal properties only or the objective aspects of the artwork. Rejection of formalism is again, only one perspective (not all) of the contextualism that the author proposes to propound. Along with the consideration of value of the object itself, value of its experience is also considered by rejecting formalism per se in favour of contextualism.

Attached to this formalism is also a critical perspective of *disinterested* attention which the author proposes to avoid in assessing the value and experience of an artwork. Finally, he clarifies that his investigation is empirical, and he takes account of history of art, art world and the history of Western aesthetic theory, particularly focusing the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the period when the *disinterested* theory and art museums were on the ascendancy.

The author's correlation of the historical events of the installations of art museums with the theory of *disinterestedness* is really of great insight, which to my knowledge, remained unexplored so far. The idea that the most popular Kantian theory of the *aesthetic disinterestedness,* continuing its influence till the philosophers like Geoffrey Bullough, emerges in the historical practices of setting up art museums, is most convincing. In contrast to this Western perspective, as I have shown in 2003 (my essay in *Art and Experience*), the classical Sanskrit aestheticians propounded the *participation* theory i.e., the audience *participates* in the theatrical performance without any *disinterestedness* (*na tâtasthyena*). The decontextualization of artworks by placing them in museums or any exhibition was not in the classical and medieval Indian practices. Art has been always contextualized – in the temples, shirnes, palaces and royal courts, and they were all appreciated in their respective contexts. Thus the classical Indian sculpture on the temples cannot be appreciated appropriately when taken out of their religious contexts. Similarly, the musical *rÀgas* in the medieval period cannot be appreciated isolating them from their courtly/political contexts. Besides, the author rightly asserts that the dimensions of context are various – ethical, social, sexual, emotional, imaginative and religious so on and so forth. The sexual postures carved in the temples and the sexual pictures in the bed room of a *nâgaraka* (civilian) or in the brothels carry different meanings and must, therefore, be valued and experienced differently. Pages 2-16 provide a useful reading adding to our knowledge of the historical facts and events that enrich our understanding the foundation of such a powerful theory as the *aesthetic disinterest* that covered a large part of the modern Western aesthetic thought. The author writes:

> What I find historically interesting about the fact that aestheticism and aesthetic disinterest theories were rising at around the same time as art museums were being founded is that they all seemed to be about the same thing. At the start of the disinterest theorizing – this is the case for both Shaftesbury and Hutcheson — disinterest primarily had a negative sense: if one could eliminate from one's concerns anything personal (personal advantages, personal associations and connections, and so forth), one could judge properly. Later theories, including Kant's and, into the twentieth century, that of Jerom Stolnitz, incorporate a positive element: consider the object for its own sake, on its own terms. What all these theories recommend is a removal of an object of aesthetic consideration from any contemplative context that is impure, tainted by situation, circumstances, personal psychology, function, purpose, or instrumentality. What is it that the art

museum does? In large measure, the art museum provides the physical vanue for encouraging precisely what the disinterest theorists recommend. (p.10)

Consider the difference between John Keats's viewing the Grecian Urn in the British Museum and a Greek audience's viewing it in its Athenian context. Similarly, one viewing the sculptural images on the body of the temple of Konarka and the same one viewing it dislocated and exhibited in a museum. Museum is a place of preservation, not the context of creation of artwork. In fact, museums are responsible for the rise of formalism in philosophy of art (at least in the Western context); and formalism is responsible for the origin of the modifier *aesthetic* that stresses the sensory aspects of experience, right from Alexander Baumgarten to Stolnitz through Lord Shaftesbuy, Francis Hutcheson, Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer: If Kant believed that by one's aesthetic attitude (disinterested perception) one would be in a position to make "correct" aesthetic evaluation, Schopenhauer and Stolintz replaced this correct aesthetic evaluation by focusing on the conditions for aesthetic experience. Thus aesthetic evaluation is now replaced by aesthetic experience (by adopting the "aesthetic attitude") implying that any object can be viewed aesthetically if one adopts a specific attitude toward it, i.e., the *disinterested attitude*. Paradoxically, this view emerging out of formalism rejects formalism itself. By that way, finally, the whole world would appear as an artwork rejecting completely the difference between art and nature.

The critical situation reminds the one in the Sanskrit tradition I have discussed in my 2003 book. Abhinavagupta speaks of a kind of attitude necessary for a theatre-goer: "today I am going to watch a theatrical performance in an auditorium where actors and actresses would be playing the roles of different characters accompanied by music and dance." This attitude (*abhisandhi*) is not any specifically psychological phenomenon that can be modified by one "dramatic attitude" or so. According to the Sanskrit philosophers no general modifier can be used for the attitude of the audience of all kinds of artwork. Bhattanayaka of course thinks of an attitude that a man must have to perceive the whole world as a theatrical performance (*jagannâtyam*). But his is the attitude of a philosopher who aims at experiencing the ultimate Reality (Brahman) not any artwork. The difference between these two kinds of experience has been amply elaborated upon by Abhinavagupta (10^{th} c. A.D.)

The author's account of the twentieth century avant-garde art – that of Marcel Duchamp or Andy Warhol – that gave rise to the theories of two influential philosophers such as George Dickie and Arthur Danto, the theories known popularly as the institutional theory and art-world theory respectively, refers to them by a single word *challenge*. Both the artwork and the theorists *challenge* the traditional notion of art as made by the artist with formal properties. *The Fountain, The Readymades* are not *artifacts* with any formal properties, but simply acknowledged as artworks institutionally or by a group of people constituting an art world. These theorists disregard the aesthetic value that is called instrumental or what the author names *production* value, i.e., value lies in certain subjective states that are produced through attention to the artwork. Monroe Beardsley, for example, talks of production of aesthetic experience in the

audience; Nelson Goodman talks of producing a certain cognitive experience; Leo Tolstoy points to the production of emotional state. Similarly the author also takes account of some contemporary accounts of the definitions of art that defy the traditional (mimetic) ones – there is no single definition; no single feature is shared by all art objects, but various art objects share some common features with other art objects making a family out of art. Morris Weitz suggests that art is a concept that continues to grow and evolve. Danto says artwork is an object of interpretation by a collective body consisting of artists, critics, patrons, audience, art historians, curators, producers/ directors. Jerold Levinson's art-historical theory asserts that an object is called an artwork if it is produced on the model of artworks produced earlier, in other words, it follows the traditional criteria — hardly an improvement over Dickie and Danto, excepting that his definition places art in the tradition context. Kendal Walton's view of involving relational properties is also a contextualist stand. Besides the issue of definition, the author also takes several other issues such as power of art, meaningfulness and science into account, and focuses on the Marxist, feminist, nationalist, religious perspectives as they form the contexts of art that make it valuable.

David Fenner's continuous pursuit of aesthetical scholarship for over decades has endowed him with an insight that explores new perspectives in justifying the creation and appreciation of art as an important human activity. What is most interesting in his exploration is the fact that, although artwork is a contextual phenomenon, the modern theories of art origin in its decontextualization. The Aristotelian ghost still threatens the modern theories of art that any attempt at deviation from his mimetic and cathartic theories will pull down the theorists to the fathomless bottom of the ocean where they would grapple with their very existence.

Abdul Razak Gurnah (Ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Salman Rushdie,* Cambridge: University Press, 2007, pp.200.

Cambridge University Press acknowledges the literary merit of Salman Rushdie by placing him among the great authors of global renown who constitute the dignified series of the Cambridge Companion. It is a rare tribute to Rushdie indeed!, keeping aside his controversial aspects in the history of literature in English.

Rushdie's literary popularity is situational through his detour in the areas of journalism, TV performance, acting, history of Islamic religion and social activities. The path from the Cambridge Master's degree in history to the course of a novelist has been rather smooth and natural as has been his journey from Bombay to Britain with a brief stay in Pakistan, and his postmodernist vision in contributing to the tradition of intertextuality has also been a timely event. But the subject matter of his representation has remained only topical as suitable for the postmodernist challenge to anything eternal or universal. Rushdie intertwines three categories of texts -- history, cinema and narrative fiction – projecting the postmodernist triumph of multiplicity and fragmentation over oneness and integrity, triggered by his experience of Indian culture as dominated by its syncretism, and what his literary texts represent are sarcasm, satire and parody that

expose the religious fundamentalism both in India and Pakistan. His cultural citique is founded on religion rather than on language, and for that matter, his cultural paradigm is Islamic which has misguided him in understanding the true spirit of Indian culture, which is more linguistic than religious. Brahmanic ideology continued to survive by its linguistic identity by its religious rigour, as evident in its compromise with several religious groups in the course of its growth and progress, whereas, on the other hand, Islamic culture is absolutely identified by its religious principles. Arabic, Persian, Egyptian, Spanish, Malaysian, Urdu all are under the umbrella of Islamic religion. But, as Patanjali has said, Aryan or Brahmanic culture is identified by the language of the Vedas and non-Vedic texts as they are *used* by the people of this Âryadeúa. However, it is a paradox that the very point which popularized Rushdie – his fragmented vision of the cultures of India and Pakistan – has made him most reasonably controversial: he is a superficial observer, and postmodernism believes in this superficiality rather than in any depth. Thus we can never expect a Gjellerup or an Hesse in Rushdie's experience of Indian culture that starts with the Bollywood cinema industry and ends in the journalistic treatment of the cultures that he proposes to represent. He only ridicules himself when he claims to be one among Gogal, Cervantes, Kafka, Melville, Machado and even Swift. (p.30)

Treating Indian culture in its fragmented-colonial and postcolonial perspective- is certainly a parochial and prejudiced attitude notwithstanding the postmodernist emphasis on imperfection, with only one justification that the treatment is satirical set against India's glorious past going beyond the medieval Mughal rule to its classical and post-classical period. The Bollywood cinema industry with its Raj Kapor and K. Asif traditions has entirely brought a qualitative degradation in the Indian cultural values, in spite of India's response to the Western technological developments. Vijay Mishra's chapter in the volume highlights Rushdie's literary sensibility originating in the Bombay cinema culture exhibiting at the same time the degraded status of this origin in contrast to the cultural level of Calcutta culture of Bengali films exhibiting a shining contrast between Raj Kapoor's *Sri 420* and Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* – which one should measure India's cultural values? A particular case of Rushdie's failure in appreciating the aesthetic representation of sexual passion in the Indian tradition is his description of sexual behaviour of Pia and Nayyar (*The Lovers of Kashmir:* 1948) what he calls "indirect kiss" (*MC*, 142) – kissing not one-another as in the Western Cinema, but *things*. Not only kissing, all other signs of sexual behaviour must be this way represented in the theatrical (and so also in cinema) shows, a method amply and most successfully used by Satyajit Ray – the semiotics of sexual love approved of as early as the 3rd century AD by Vatsyayana. There is no point in treating this method sarcastically. Rushdie should have noted the archetypal character in Anarkali's mother (a type of Kaikeyi) when she keeps the award declared by Akbar reserved for an appropriate occasion. Similarly, his parodical conversion of Shelley's "If winter comes, can spring be far behind" to "If Gibreel dies, could India be far behind" (TSV, 28-29) lacks in an aesthetic taste excepting wit and sarcasm.

The constituent parts of Rushdie's aesthetic are, as Peter Morey notes (p.37), secular Islam, aspects of Hindusm, third world liberationism and lukewarm socialism; but can there be a secular Islam? Rusdie's anti-fundationism, anti-foundamentalism and anti-nationalism in a postcolonial context are most remarkable and warmly welcome; but to expect a secular attitude from a religion-based culture is as self-contradictory as utopiac, and therefore an unreachable destination except ending in sarcasm and parody. Morey's placing him with a possible comparison with Charles Dickens is only an illusory possibility. Similarly his applying Samuel Deane's observation about Joyce to Rushdie (p.40-41), "The British imperium was overcome by parody, taking the tradition of literature as it has expressed itself in the novel, and scrutinizing its silent assumptions" is rather too superficial to be accepted as is his comments that the English tradition in Rushdie brings us back to the global perspective.

Amina Yaquin's cross-examination of the issue of gender in Rushdie's writings is quite an attractive feature of the volume. She agrees that Aijaz Ahmed usefully draws our attention to the class bias in Rushdie (male figures are eliminated from the oppressed sections of society in highlighting the oppression of women) focusing the elite, politically aware middle and upper classes. But she complains that Ahmed falls a victim to a fixed understanding of sexuality and women, and is rather simplistic in reading women as a substitute for the absent underclasses : "By contrast Rushdie is concerned to highlight the specificities of gender oppression in his version of Pakistani society, which are to do with women's domestic roles, child-bearing and socially enforced passivity in relation to active male characters." (p.65) In contrast to Ahmed, Yaquin recommends Joan Scott's Foucauldian approach to the identity of "women" tracing the specificities of the term in given contexts ; and in that context the feminist historian should discover that "*women* refers to so many subjects, different and the same". (p.65)

Ib Johansen, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Brendon Nicholls, Goel Kuortti, Deepika Bahri, Minoli Salgado and Anshuman Mondal study the individual texts *Grimus*, *Midnight's Children*, *Shame*, *The Satanic Vesses*, the noevella *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, a story collection *East, West*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* and *Fury.*

Gurnah's study of *Midnight's Children* is, in its details, a very sincere and sympathetic treatment that examines its intertextuality provoking varied responses in various readers: for Western readers a fantasy, and for the South Asian readers a history, besides dealing with "politics, social history, farce, filmic extravaganza, uncut comedy and a tragedy of loveless families." Rushdie's technical mentors are *The Tin Drum* (published in German in 1959) and *Tristram Shandy,* but his intertwining facts and fantasy to subvert the language of authority and overturning hierarchies by allowing the impossible to happen draw upon the Bakhtinian 'Carnivalesque'. The failure of Nehru's promise of freedom ending in Indira Gandhi's Emergency, also puts an end to Saleem's delusion of responsibility for India's history. Rushdie's greatness lies in his skilful dealing with history as a fiction – in parodying Indira Gandhi's efforts for

making history that wipes out Nehru's optimism pitiably. The complex fragments put up in a non-linear and interrupted form are instances of Bakhtin's heteroglossia where a multiplicity of voices and meaning are brought into an unofficial discourse. Thus Rushdie's technique in constructing a complex plot is indeed no less powerful than that in *Tom Jones*. Undoubtedly, there is a lot of technical innovations and experiment in structuring the theme of the novel, but what the reader grapples with is the author's world view, his vision of the human existence itself that correlates the past and present and proceeds on to future.

The same also is true with his reasonably controversial work *The Satanic Verses* studied by Joel Kuortti: "The novel will be discused here as a text: first its structure, characterization and stylistic features, then the wide range of themes it discusses its intertextual reaches. The discussion will close by considering the ethical issues Rushdie's novel raises," (p.125). Absolute religious fundamentalism voiced by Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* has evidently been overruled by the literary merit of the work as it has overcome the time of crisis. Kuortti writes: "Through the use of postmanteau and deconstructive devices and strategies such as postmanteau words and *historiographic metafiction*. Rushdie manages to create a heteroglassic, multi-voiced narrative which **–** explicitly as well as implicitly**–** plays ironically with the readers' expectations." (p.128) The technique of heteroglossy has already been exercised by the modernist poet Thomas Eliot, but, as Homi Bhabha warns, "the evocation of such multiplicity is also a risky matter, for "there is always the threat of mistranslation, confusion and fear'." (p.128) As regards the ethical aspect of the novel, Kuortti quotes relevantly Rushdie: "a poet's work…to name the unnameable, to point at frauds, to take sides, start arguments, shape the world and stop it from going to sleep." Clearly, the voice is that of a satirist, may be a postmodernist match for the *enlightenment* satire of Swift. Rushdie thus relevantly parodies C.S. Lewis's fourth love 'agape' (the first three being affection, friendship and eros) or love of God subverting it to 'love of a dream'.

While studying *Shame* Brendon Nicholls highlights the political issues of post-partition and racism in Britain during the early 19080's and comments that the creative imagination displayed in such cultural translations enables literary criticism as a political act within its own place and item. (p.109) But the most insightful observation that Nicholls's study of *Shame* reveals is:

> Rushdie engages with some of the most significant tensions and concerns at work within formulations of postcolonial nationhood. Central to Rushdie's is the sense that a national narrative founded upon repression inevitably exhibits a crisis of plausibility. As such, any cultural claim staked upon the homogeneity of the nation already authorizes the alternatives, detours and embellishments that antagonize its intention. To put this another way, since the authoritarian state actively suppresses possibilities within its own puritanical narratives, it at some level unconsciously imagines-into –being the very same cultural contestants that it seems unable to avoid.

> Appropriately enough, in *Shame's* imaging of a heavily fictionalized Pakistan, Rushdie must seek an adequate literary form through which to convey collective experiences and to indicate the consensual silences that allow such collective experiences to operate. In Pakistan, he suggests, a fundamental silence surrounds the subordinate position occupied by women within the national corpus. This silence forms part of the larger patterns of repression that texture national political life. (p.110)

Shame might be less complex in its structure than *The Satanic Verses* and *Midnight's Children,* but it is less controversial in its theme as Rushdie handles the political problematic in a postcolonial nation applicable to all other similar nations. Thus the social scenario dominates over the religious fundamentalism, and therefore the satirical tone is more relishable in its literary appeal.

As noted earlier, Rushdie's literary popularity is situational and its topicality, despite its richness in narrative techniques catering to the postmodernist taste, is unable to rise to the level of a standing merit appreciable for all times. However, the contributors to this Cambridge Companion series have done their best in assessing Rushdie as he deserves, focusing the vital issues in postcolonial nations that disturb the humanity as a whole.

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